THE UNIVERSITY OF VIKRAMAŚĪLA

By

Prof. Radhakrishna Chaudhary

Reader

Department of History,

Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur–7

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PREFACE

Much is not known about the history and antiquity of the University of Vikramaśīla. Antichak in the district of Bhagalpur is now accepted as the site of the ancient Vikramaśīla University. During my short stay at Colgong (Bhagalpur), as the Principal of the S. S. V. College over there, I collected materials for the study of the subject and the present work is a result of that. The mission of my stay at Colgong has been fulfilled to a great extent. The results of the excavations, conducted so for, the philosophical base of the University and a working bibliography have been given in the appendix.

I am very much thankful to the authorities of the Bihar Research Society for their decision to undertake the publication of this monograph. I crave the indulgence of readers for all its shortcomings.

31 March, 1975

Shanti Niwas, Bompass Town,
DEOGHAR

Radhakrishna Chaudhary

THE UNIVERSITY OF VIKRAMAŚĪLA

I

The dust of controversy with regard to the name, antiquity and historicity of Vikramaśīla is yet to settle down inspite of the fact that the excavations, conducted under the auspices of the Patna University and subsequently taken over by the Archaeological Survey of India under the Vikramasila Excavation Project, Government of India, have done commendable work towards the solution of this mysterious problem. Nālandā was fortunate in having Hiuentsang and a host of other Chinese and foreign students whose accounts helped the identification of its site. The name Nālandā, still current, also helped in locating the site. The University of Vikramaśīla, too, had a number of foreign students but their accounts are neither categorical nor straightforward to the extent of their being accepted as such. Even the Tibetan analysts[1] differ widely among themselves and the traditions, maintained over there, are full of contradictory statements. Sometimes the abbreviations used by them also confuse the issue. The extant works by the teachers of the University, available in Tibetan and Sanskrit, hardly throw any light on this issue. Most of their works in Tibet are still unknown to us. They have simply expounded theories relating to their schools of thought and have said nothing about themselves or the University. This is a natural phenomenon with all the authors of ancient India.

The destruction of the site is so complete that no authentic local evidence has hitherto come to light. Like Nālandā, there is no such village or a name for that matter as Vikramaśīla or Vikramaśilā. The very site in existence is called into question. If Lāmā Tāranātha is to be relied upon, there was a *Chaitya* or a temple in the centre of the University and there were one hundred seven or eight monasteries around them. There's no point in doubting the statement of this Lāmā, who was writing a history of Buddhism and who has mentioned all the important places,

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1. At the very outset, I must confess that my knowledge of all the available Ṭibetan sources is based on the English translation of these Texts.

connected or associated with Buddhism. He might have utilised the sources now lost to us. The Patna University team of excavators exposed a *Chaitya*[2] having some Buddhist sculptures all around the walls. The fact that the structure is a *Chaitya* is further confirmed by an inscription, discovered in course of excavation. The terraces over there also prove that the discovery was a very important one, that is, the *Chaitya* referred to by Tāranātha. The mounds, all around, and the excavated structures are indicative of the fact that the *Chaitya* was situated in the centre of the University. This discovery in village Antichak, P. O. Patharghata, Dist. Bhagalpur, has led the archaeologists to believe that the excavated site represents the seat of the University of Vikramaśīla. It has so long been a bone of contention among the scholars and will continue to be as such unless further solid evidences are forthcoming. From an examination of the exposed sites, nearby mounds, its close proximity to Patharghata hills and the antiquities spread over an area of about ten miles, one feels inclined to suggest that the exposed *Chaitya* is the same as represented in Lāmā Tāranātha's account. The future excavations might support this contention and settle the issue for good.

There are certain cogent reasons for the suggestions. From Colgong to Patharghata there is a chain of hillocks in the Ganges–three in Colgong and about the same number at Patharghata. Havaldar Tripathi in his study on the course of the *Gaṅgā* in Bihar suggests that the three hillocks at Colgong were the seats of real *Jāhnuāśrama* and the Gaṅgā takes a northerly course on account of these hills. Here the Gaṅgā is known as *Jahnu-hṛda*[3]. *Jāhnuāśrama* extended from Colgong to Vaṭeśwara, where Dharmapāla of the Pāla dynasty is believed to have laid the foundation of the University of Vikramaśīla. In the first half of the seventh century A. D. Hiuentsang referred to a hill, twenty four miles east of Bhagalpur[4], crowned with a temple and Cunningham identified it with Patharghata near Colgong. On the top of this rock, old remains and structures could still be seen. These hillocks in the Ganges from Colgong to Patharghata have relics of the Gupta period and at Patharghata, inspite of numerous thefts with the connivance of the local people, there are numerous Pāla

2 The report of the Excavation is yet to come out. I have studied the Chaitya personally and the account given here is on that basis. I am open to correction.

3 *Gaṅgā*. He cites the evidence of *Nārdiya Purāṇa*, Uttarakhaṇḍa, 41/37.

4 Cunningham, *Geography of Ancient Indin*; N. L. Dey, *Ancient and Medieval Geography of India*.

images in black stones and one of them, the Sūrya image, is really remarkable. The Gupta relics can be seen on all the hillocks and at Patharghata a Gupta relief on the top of one of the caves is unique in many senses and may be taken as Bihar's contribution to Indian art. At Patharghata it is popularly known as *Chaurāsimuni*. There are a few caves at Patharghata - meant possibly for meditation but they are not so well-preserved as that of Rajgir. Much of the antiquarian remains and historical objects stand damaged and completely destroyed on account of the ravages done by the Bengal Potteries (since closed) but a close survey of the site can convince even a layman that the area was once the seat of the monasteries. It is situated on the bank of the Ganges and is at a distance of about two to three kilometres from the site of the exposed *Chaitya*. The excavations, carried so far at Antichak, have brought to light remnants of monastic sites or monasteries. Few stone and bronze images of the Pāla period have also come to light and discoveries, made so far, reveal to us that the University was situated in the vicinity of the area spreading from Patharghata to Antichak. An inscription of a feudal chief of Vaṭeśwara (Patharghata) was discovered and later published[5].

Though the proposed identification is there, unanimity about the actual site is yet to be achieved. Various conjectures have been hazarded[6] S. C. Das placed it near Sultanganj, a view to which scholars like Rāhula Sānkṛityayāna and others have subscribed, Rāhulajī kept himself open to the possibility of Vikramaśīla being further east of Sultanganj. He was of opinion that all the sites, right from Shahkund and Sultanganj to Patharghata, should be examined and studied for finding out the truth[7] There might have been smaller monasteries or monastic sites, all over the area from Shahkund to Patharghata for the residence of the Buddhists who frequented this region. On their way from Odantpuri and Nālandā to Vikramaśīla in the east, they passed through the predominantly Buddhist areas like Jaganagar, Lakhisarai, Kiul, Uren, Indpe and many others, still awaiting archaeologists' spades for resurrection. A former Director of Archaeology, Dr. N. P. Chakravarti, after visiting the site near Patharghata, asserted that the area around Vaṭeśwara and Patharghata should be treated as the site of the old Vikramaśīla monastery.

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5 *JBRS*, 1952, by Dr. D. C. Sircar.

6 *ARASI*, VIII., pp. 321-22. Cunningham placed Vikramaśīla in Silao (Patna).

7 In a personal talk to the author; *cf.* my Interview on Vikramaśīla published in the *Searchlight* of 20-4-1971.

S. C. Das went to the extent of identifying Vaiśakaraṇaśila of Sultanganj with Vikramaśīla, a view further supported by S. C. Vidyabhushana[8]. N.L. Dey identified it with the mordern Patharghata hills of Vaṭeśwara[9]. He says.... "there can be no doubt that Patharghata near Colgong was the ancient Vikramaśīla and that the ruins upon it are the remains of the celebrated monastery". It was the most prominent monastery in the whole of eastern India under the Pālas. Patharghata is a spur of the Colgong range and Vaṭeśwara is a place of historical importance between the east and the west. It lay on route to Bengal, Assam and further east. From the religious point of view as well, it was considered to be important because of the confluence of the Kośī and the Ganges.

It is reported that one of the seals discovered by the Patna University team, contains the legend *'Śrīvata-parvata'* (identified with modern Vaṭeśwara). If the suggested identification is accepted, Vaṭeśwara might have derived its present name from *'Vaṭaparvata'* (Parvata indicating Patharghata hills). The seals, said to be three in number, belonged to Vaṭaparvataka, mentioned as one of the *Skandhāvāras* in the Pāla records. This *Skandhāvāra* was a fortified place and further lends support to the point of view that it represents the modern village Vaṭeśwara in the Patharghata region. In the Purāṇas, it is mentioned as Vaṭeśapura or Vaṭeśwarapur. For persons of religious interests, it is known as *Vaṭeśwara-asthāna* and for others the place is known by the name of Patharghata hills. Dharmapāla is credited with having established the University on the top of a hill. Vaṭeśwara, on account of its strategical importance, seems to have been an important administrative centre and was possibly the headquarter of a feudal chief as would be evident from an inscription discovered from that place. A few miles west of Vaṭeśwara, an inscription of Ballālasena was found at Sanokhar. Pālas were replaced by the Senas in this area and it maintained its importance even then. Besides being a religious [10] centre, it continued to be administrative centre under the Senas. Both Vaṭeśwara and Patharghata are one and the same place and sculptures over there show that the site is as old as the Gupta period and it has a continuous history, on the basis of the antiquities, till the end of the thirteenth century A. D.

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8 *Bhārati*—Baiśākha—1315; *Sahitya*—śrāvaṇa—1314.

9 *JASB* (N. S.), 1901. *cf.* R. K. Choudhary, *Bihar, the homeland of Buddhism,* —P. 56.

10 *Padmapurāṇa*, Svargakhaṇḍa. Pāda 3, Adhyāya 38, Śloka—47. The name given here is Vaṭeśvarapura.

L. K. Misra,[11] a local intellectual of Kāśḍī and associated with the exploration of the site for over twenty five years, suggests as follows. :—

(i) The range of Vaṭeśwara or Patharghata hills proceeding from a point approximating a quarter of a mile to the east of Gaṅgā gradually attains its peak at the water's edge and terminates abruptly, practically overlapping it, faithfully representing all that is signified by a bluff rocky hill. The bluff rocky hills stand on the right bank of the Ganges flowing due north for over ten consecutive miles, a unique feature of the Gaṅgā. The Tibetan chronicles refer to a bluff rocky hills in connection with the description of Vikramaśīla.

(ii) The flight of steps cut into solid fixed rocks are still in a state of preservation. The writer of these lines has seen such solid fixed rocks (cut into steps) all over the area and in almost all the adjoining villages. A person going from Colgong to Antichak can find a large number of stone blocks, belonging to the Pāla period, spread over the villages from Anadipur to Antichak. Few sculptural pieces, broken and mutilated, belonging to the Pāla period, are also collected in the com pound of S. S. V. College, Colgong, popularly known as Hill House or Ganguly's Castle.

(iii) Those built with the detached stone blocks are seen scattered in neighbouring villages.

(iv) The foundations and directions of steps towards the summit of the hill are distinct even today.

(v) Half way up the hill on its western and northern faces are a number of caves, some of them with moulded stone doors and one consisting of three chambers.

(vi) The bricks are of different sizes $(14'' \times 9'' \times 2''$ and $18'' \times 11'' \times 2\frac{3}{4}'')$.

(vii) The University expanded in miles east and south.

(viii) Massive building foundations, stone pillars, votive stūpas in concrete, blackstone door frames and images in the neighbouring areas. Images of all descriptions and denominations have been discovered and by now most of them have been stolen away.

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11 *Organiser*, Nov. 9, 1950.

(ix) According to different sources, the University had six gates enclosing a large open space sufficient for an assembly of about eight to ten thousand persons. The quadrangle was evidently a large Buddhist monastery.

(x) It was a religious-cum-educational institution specialising in the Mahāyāna and Tāntric forms of Buddhism.

Vikramaśīla had an interesting origin. It is said that Dharmapāla, the Pāla ruler, while on a visit to these parts, was greatly attracted by the sight of the beautiful hillocks on the bank of the Ganges and he, then and there, decided to found a Vihāra at that very place. That very Vihāra, which came to be built in the last decade of the eighth century or the first decade of the ninth century A. D., grew into an important seat of learning, in course of time, and attracted a good number of foreign students. It is said that the number of foreign students at this University was greater than at Nālandā. Taking all possibilities into consideration, B. C. Law suggested that Patharghata was the actual site of the University since it is believed to have been situated on a precipitous hill on the right bank of the Ganges possibly at *Silāsaṅgama*—a confluence of the Kośī and the Ganges. Patharghata corresponds exactly with the account of Vikramaśīla in the Tibetan Chronicles. Ruins over there bear testimony to the fact. In course of last eight or nine centuries, much of the old sites and ruins have either been eroded *or* washed away and after every flood (during the rainy season) one can see the coming up of new structures here and there. The site seems to have been robbed more than once. A Tibetan tradition[12] says that Āchārya Kāmpilya was once struck with the features of a bluff rocky hill which stood on the bank of the Ganges. He observed the peculiar fitness for the site of a Vihāra. Kāmpilya was born as Dharmapāla and he built the royal monastery over there. There is yet another tradition which says that the University was so named because a Yakṣa called '*Vikrama*' was suppressed here.

It has been held that there was a *Chaitya* in the centre of the University and there were in all one hundred and seven monasteries. On the walls of the University were painted the images of the *Paṇḍitas*, eminent in their own fields and well-known for their character. A few of the eighty four *Siddhas* also belonged to this University and their associations added considerable prestige to this international seat of *Vajrayāna-tantra-*

12 *JBTS*, I. 10.

yāna-mantrayāna-sahajayāna learning. The extent of the length and breadth of the University can be had from the fact that whereas Nālandā had only one gate, Vikramaśīla had six such gates with six eminent *Dvārapaṇḍitas*. It was a royal University fortified on all sides and surrounded by masive walls. Both Tāranātha[13] and Paṇḍita Sumati Śrījñāna (the author of *Sambhala-Lam-Yig*)[14] suggest that in Vikramaśīla, the king erected for sometime a kind of fortress and some soldiers were deputed there for protection. The cadastral map of village Antichak shows alignment of a compact area, though the traces of a fortress are yet to be exposed.

The exposed *Chaitya* at village Antichak, P. O. Patharghata, Dist. Bhagalpur, is 50 ft. in height and 75 ft. in width. The whole rectangular structure is made of bricks with chambers and antechambers on all its four sides, one at the ground floor and the other at the height of about nineteen ft. with about nine ft. wide staircase and a number of terraces. On its three sides leading to the other path all the forewalls of the *Pradakṣiṇāpatha* are decorated. The *Chaitya* is unique in many ways. Besides chambers and antechambers attached to its northern and southern wings, entrance to chamber is through a gateway, the doors of which are made of stones. These doors have sockets to hold door leaves made of wood. Door leaves used to revolve over a circular iron object. Holes are made to fix plasters to the chamber walls. Around the *Chaitya* there were fifty three cells suitable for tantric esoteric practices and fifty four for general use of works. It is believed that in all there were one hundred and eight chambers which are yet to be discovered. These one hundred and eight monasteries were under 108 teachers—possibly each monastery was under the direct control and overall supervision of one teacher, under whom many others served.

An image of Buddha in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* (of about 4½ ft.) was found in the northern chamber. In the eastern and western chambers the

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13 *IHQ, XXVII*, p. 240 *Cf.*
पुरातत्वनिबन्धावली, पृ० २७४—पाथरघट्टा से दो तीन मील पर अवस्थित बावन-बिगहा (?) के ध्वंसावशेष अधिक विस्तृत हैं। वहाँ कितने ही स्तूपों के ध्वंस भी दिखलाई पड़ते हैं। ....विक्रमशिला की खोज के लिये मुंगेर से राजमहल तक की गंगा के दो दक्षिणी तट पर अवस्थित सभी पहाड़ी भूमि—सबौर परगने की भूमि को विशेषकर—की छानबीन करनी चाहिये। पृ० २६९-२७४।

14 *Sambhala-Lam-Yig* by Blo-bzam-dpal-ldan-yeses (Indian name Sumati Śrijñāna) edited by Prof. A. Jha, Patna, 1966. It is a very important text, though mostly following Tāranātha. p. XXI (Introduction).

image of Avalokiteśvara in *padmāsana mudrā* has been found. A bronze image of Avalokiteśvara has also come to light and various other images of all descriptions representing the eastern school of medieval sculpture have been discovered in and around the site. Stray remains of monastic establishments have also been found. Images of *Padmapāṇi* and *Maitreya* have also come to light. In its heyday, the University was noted for Tāntricism and objects related to Tantric postures and Tantra can be seen among the antiquities discovered so far. Broken seals and votive stūpas are there and one of them has the legend '*Dharmadevasya*'. This legend has been identified with Dipaṁkara but the inference is not open and above board and unanimity on this score is impossible in the present state of our knowledge. Another broken seal has the legend "Vīra Va...... (Vajra ?) and it has been identified with Vīravajra, one of the important exponents of the Vajrayāna Cult. He is believed to have been a preceptor of Dipaṁkara. A stone slab containing twentynine lines of inscriptions does not throw any specific light on the history of the University. This inscription and other inscriptions are yet to be published. The Tibetan ruler had got a hostel constructed for the students of Tibet at this University and this is yet to be discovered.

On an examination of all the relevant Tibetan and other sources and on the basis of the discoveries, made by the excavations so far, it may tentatively be said that the University lay within the Patharghata—Antichak region of the district of Bhagalpur. What seems plausible, in the present state of our knowledge, is that in the beginning the University had its birth in the Patharaghata region and gradually it spread into a bigger area having a host of buildings constructed in course of four centuries. A University, having a residential capacity of about ten thousand students, must have a very wide area. One has, therefore, to take into account the whole range of area from Patharghata hills to the confines of Pirpainti on the eastern Railway for finding out the actual location of the University. Keeping in view the impending attack or destruction, the king had fortified the University and it was intact when elder Dharmaswāmī had come to India. We are of opinion that the University was located in the area suggested above.

II

The assumption, suggested above, leads us further to discuss the historicity of the name of the University—whether it was Vikramaśīla or Vikramaśilā. Like the issue of location, the differences with regard to the



General view of the Patharghatta Hills.

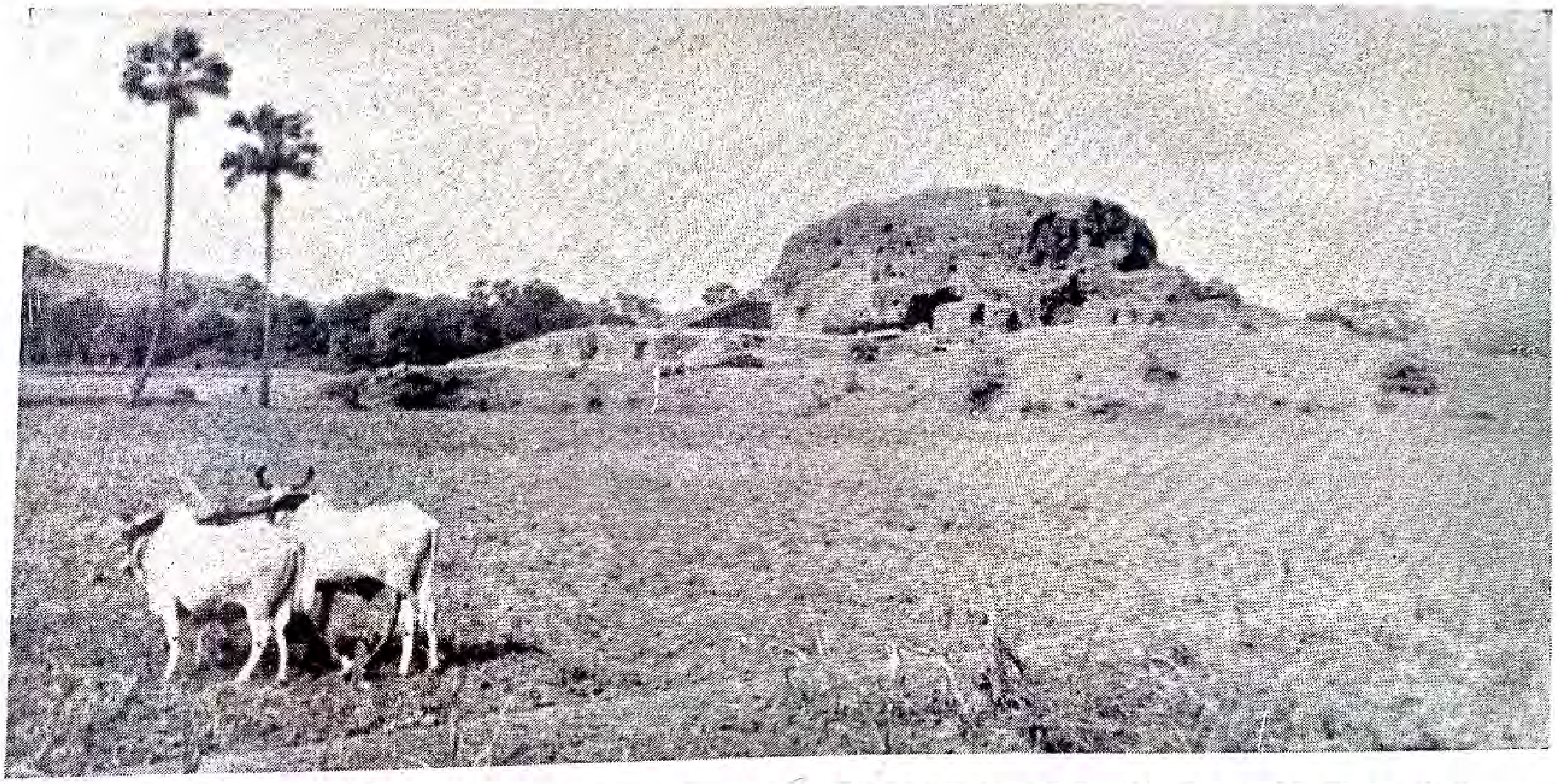


A Gupta Relief (Popularly known as Chaurasi Muni) Over a Cave at the Patharghatta Hills.



Pāla images near Vaṭeśwarasthāna Cave, Patharghatta Hills (Standing right to the image is the author.

Plate No. 11



A general view of the Chaitya exposed at Antichak (believed to be the site of the old Vikramaśīla University)

Photo by the author with the kind permission of Director of the Vikramaśīla Excavation Project.

Plate No. III



Northern Gate of the University exposed by the Vikramaśīla Excavation Project in 1972.
Photo by the author with the kind permission of the Director of the Project.

Plate No IV



Image of Jambhala discovered in 1972—Photo by the author with the kind permission of the Director of the Project.

actual name of the university are equally great among the scholars and it still continues to be a point of dispute and controversy.[15] Some scholars are inclined to call it '*Vikramaśīla*' while others call it by the name of '*Vikramśilā*'. It was on account of its situation on a bluff rocky hill that it came to be known as '*Vikramaśilā*'. The attribution is not convincing and the significance of its name is to be sought somewhere else. Though the chief sources for our study are the Tibetan chronicles, the word used for the university does not have any Tibetan equivalent for rock or stone. The situation of the university on a bluff rocky hill should not be taken as the basis for its nomenclature. The name of the monastery in the Tibetan sources occurs as '*Nam-gnom-ṅaṅ-tshul*—a word which stands neither for rock nor for stone but actually conveys the sense of a strong moral conduct signified by the Sanskrit equivalent '*Śīla*'.

R. C. Majumdar holds that the reference to the Vihāra as *Śrīmad-Vikramaśīladeva-Mahāvihāra*[16] is indicative of the fact that it bore the name of its founder, Dharmapāla of the Pāla dynasty, whose *Viruda* was *Vikramaśīla* signifying a man with strong moral conduct *or* one who subdues his natural disposition strongly. The Tibetans took it as the centre of learning where there was insistence on strong moral conduct. It may be suggested that the monastery owed its name to the high moral character of its members. It is also probable that in order to commemorate his own name Dharmapāla, also known as Vikramaśīla, established this royal institution after his own name. Sandhyakar Nandi in his *Rāmacharita* says—"Yuvarāja Harivarṣa belonged to the Pāla family of Bengal....It has been said that Vikramaśīla, the father of Yuvarāja was another name of Dharmapāla". Like the Chūḍāṇanīvīhāra of southern India, Vikramaśīla vīhāra might have owed its name to its founder. Both Dharmapāla and Devapāla (the latter by Dr. R. C. Majumdar) are credited with having founded this institution and the author of the *Sambhala-lam-Yig*[16*] credits Dharmapāla with its faundation. The

15 R. C. Majumdar (edited), *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 115 fn; He holds the same view in his latest publication '*History of Ancient Bengal*' (Calcutta—1971); J. N. Samaddar, *Glories of Magadha*, p. 146 ff; H. D. Sankalia, *University of Nalanda* (Madras 1934); P. V. Bapat (edited), *Twenty Five Hundred Years of Buddhism*; P. N. Bose—'*Indian Teaches in the Buddhist Universities*' (Madras—1923); *JASB*. 1919; R. K. Choudhary, '*History of Bihar*'; and *Bihar, the homeland of Buddhists*; R. R. Diwakar (edited), *Bihar through the Ages*.

16 *cf*. Mitra's *Nepal Catalogue*, 229.

16* *Op. Cit*. P. 50.

Tibetan belief is that the university lay at a place where a Yakṣa named *Vikrama* was suppressed and hence the site was known[17] as Vikramaśīla. The suggestion does not seem to be convincing. 'Vikramaśīla' does not in any way signify suppression rather it does indicate a 'Śīlā' as 'Vikrama' (strong) as stone or rock.

In the colophon of the manuscript of the *Śragdharāstotra-ṭīkā*,[18] we have the following—"*Śrīmad-Vikrama-śīla-deva-Vihāriya Rājaguru Paṇḍitamitu-Śrī Jinarakṣita Kulabālākastutikā parisamāptā*. In the *Bṛhat-Śaṁbhu-purāṇa*[19] we have the expression '*Vikramaśīlasivihāre*'. In the Tibetan texts also, it has been mentioned as such by Tāranātha and mentioned accordingly by Roerich. The latest writer on the subject, Alaka Chttopadhyaya[20] says—"......in the Tibetan translation of the name Vikramaśīla had nothing to suggest the idea of a rock or hill.... .....the name of a Vihāra is the idea of strong moral conduct (Śīla)..... ....a name was chosen for the monastery for glorifying it as a centre of strong moral discipline". The Tibetan accounts of this university are not free from doubts and surmises rather they suffer from a number of incongruities but even then there is a surprising similarity between the accounts of Tāranātha, Sumpā and Sumatiśrījñāna. The colophons of a number of manuscripts in Tibet and Tibetan collections elsewhere mention Vikramaśīla as the name of the monastery, which was internationally known for its high moral character. The monks set an ideal for others. So far as Tibetans are concerned, they had not even an inkling of the fact or even the possibility of the monastery being named after Dharmapāla or Devapāla. The monastery was noted for its insistence on the high moral character and values.

The 'Śīla' or the high moral conduct was the most attainable object at this University and that is why it was known as '*Vikramaśīla*'. *Śilā*' does not carry any sense. '*Vikrama*' (strong, powerful) should be taken here as an objective of '*Śīla*'. The attributes of a cultured man consist of '*Kula*' and '*Śīla*' and one possessing a strong moral conduct is known as

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17 *JBTS*—I.

18 Edited in the Bibliotheica Indica series by S. C. Vidyabhushan, p. 50.

19 Edited by H. P. Sashtri, pp. 320-21.

वाराणस्यो नगरयो च विहारे यत्र ख्यान्तिक
तदा **विक्रमशिलसि** विहारे वसुदुत्तमः ।

20 Alaka Chattopadhyaya, '*Atisa and Tibet*', pp. 105 ff. It is one of the most authoritative works published in recent years. It is not possible to accept all his views and inferences which are coloured by regional loyalties. That does not, however, detract the merit of this learned work.

'*Vikramaśīla*' and if Dharmapāla established this University with the object of producing scholars of high moral eminence, there is every likelihood of the University being named as '*Vikramaśīla*' or called as such. How strong was the sense of morality of the teachers of this University will be evident from the following remarks of Ratnākara who spoke to Jayasila on the eve of Atiśa's departure –". . . . As you have been a pupil of mine, *to displease you would be to shake your confidence in my kindness.* Out of compassion for you and your countrymen many of whom have died for taking Atisa to Tibet, I lend his services to your country for three years......"This shows the moral strength and character of Sthavira Ratnākara. In Tibetan '*Vikrama*' signifies a place where congregations are held[21]. If this version is accepted, then Patharghata would be the actual site of the University and association of '*Śīla*' with '*Congregation*' (Vikrama) would mean a place of stones where congregation used to be held. Alternatively, it might mean congregations being held for the attainment of '*Śīla* (or high moral conduct) as the highest aim of education and since such congregations used to be held here so it was known as Vikramaśīla.

S. C. Das refers to a legendary story of how Kaṁpala (Kāmpilya ?) of Nālandā, who had attained '*Śiddhi*, foresaw the establishment of Vikramaśīla and was later born as Dharmapāla who is said to have furnished the Vihāra with four establishments, each consisting of twenty seven monks belonging to four principal sects of Buddhism. It further proves the existence of one hundred and eight monk teachers of the University. Since it specialised in Tantras, small shrines for the study of *Guhyatantra* were established and the small caves, in and around Pathraghata, may point to some of them. Though some of the caves have been destroyed, whatever is left is sufficient to show that these were the places of Tāntric *Yogas* and *Dhyānas*. The monastery might have been started at these sites in the beginning and must have expanded later to accommodate the growing student population. The monastery was supported by about fifty establishments. It was at this monastery that a large number of Sanskrit texts were translated into Tibetan.

In view of the high moral conduct of the teachers and students of this University, it was known as '*Vikramaśīla*'. It was known by that name even then and was supposed to be known as such by the then residents of the University. The name '*Vikramaśila*' appears to be more appropriate, correct and probable. The area, where it is believed to

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21 *Cf.* S. C. Das—*Life of Atisa.*

have been located, does not have any tradition of even any corrupt form of the name of Vikramaśīla. Like Nālandā, the name of the area here is not *Vikramaśīla* but it is known here by the name of the villages like Antichak etc. No popular folklore or songs maintain any account of it nor has it been preserved as such by the local populace. Had the name of this place been Vikramaśīla, it must have been preserved in the tradition here. The very absence of any village of that name in the area is an indirect proof in support of our contention that the name of this university was '*Vikramaśīla*'. This name had nothing to do with the village of that name as it was situated in an area known by some other name. The legend '*Vaṭaparvata*' suggests that the university of Vikramaśīla was situated in the '*Vaṭaparvata*' area. Some seals having '*Vi*' (partly broken) show that they were the seals of the university. Unless further evidence is forthcoming, we have to remain satisfied with the fact that the name of the university was '*Vikramaśīla*', but in popular parlance it might have been known as '*Vikramaśīlā*'[22]. Only the discovery of an authorised seal of the university would reveal the truth and settle the issue, about its name, for good. Suppression of a 'Yakṣa' also signifies strength, both moral and physical, and even if we accept that theory, the name '*Vikramaśīla*' is more appropriate than '*Vikramaśilā*'. In a biography of Advayavajra (provenance not known) edited by Rāhulajī in the appendix of his *Dohākoṣa*,[23] we get all the prevalent names connected with this university, like Vikramaśīla, Vikramaśilā, Vikramapur etc. Vikramapur may be the same as Vikramaśīla just as Vaṭeśapura of the *Purāṇa*s is Vaṭeśwara *or* Vaṭaparvata. The identification is, of course, doubtful. Whether Vikramaśīla is to be identified with Vikramapur or not it is a doubtful proposition. The name '*Vikramaśīla*' also appears in

22 *Sambhal-Lam-Yig*, p. 50 (Hindi version). Alaka Chattopadhyaya uses the name *Vikramaśila*.

23 *Dohākoṣa, p.* 470—ततो विक्रमपुरं (यिक्रमशिला) गत्वा······
······श्रुत्वासप्तवर्षपर्य्यन्तेन सर्वशास्त्रमधिगम्य
विंशतिवर्षपर्य्यन्तं नामोपाद समीपे प्रमाणमाध्यमिक
परिमितादिशास्त्रं श्रुतं······पश्चात् महापण्डित
रत्नाकरशान्ति गुरु भट्टारकपादानं पार्श्वे निराकार
व्यवस्थां वर्ष मेकं यावत् पश्चाद् विक्रमशिल (ां)
विक्रमशिलां गत्वा महापण्डितज्ञानश्री मित्र
पादानंपार्श्वे तत्प्रकरणंश्रुतं वर्षद्वयंतावत ।
The above text is thoroughly corrupt but the contents are important. Rāhulajī, who found it in Nepal, believes in the reliability of the Manuscript. It might have been copied from an older one by an incompetent copyist.

the manuscript, under reference, alongwith other names. In and around the area where the university is believed to have been located, there is no such village as '*Vikramapur*' though a village of that name 'Vikramapur-Dhanaurā' is situated in the Colgong area. Evidences are more and more in favour of the name '*Vikramaśīla*' and that is why that after examining all the possible sources, Chattopadhyaya has preserved the name of '*Vikramaśīla*' and I believe that this was the appropriate name of the university. In course of time and in popular use it has come to be known as 'Vikramaśilā' but it does not carry any sense nor we have any such village of that name. Only an inscribed seal of the university would reveal the truth about it.

III

Dharmapala, it is believed, had built about fifty Buddhist centres in which thirty five were the centres for the study of *Prajñāpāramitā*. He was a disciple of Haribhadra and his student Buddhajñānapāda. Though there is a difference of opinion with regard to the name of Haribhadra between Sumpa and Tāranātha, there is a striking similarity between the two over other details. Siṁhabhadra of Tāranātha is possibly Haribhadra of Sumpa. In another Tibetan account, Devapāla is credited with having founded this university. Dharmapāla[23*] founded this university in the last decade of the 8th century A. D. and appointed his preceptor, Buddhajñānapāda as the head of the monastery. He continued in that capacity for a number of years. At the Vikramaśīla Vihāra, Dharmapāla granted special allowances to those who studied the text of the *prajñāpāramitāsūtras*. Tāranātha confirms this point.

During the reign of Dharmapāla, the *Saindhavaśrāvakas* created trouble at the Vihāra. Soon after erection, they came to the monastery, destroyed the metal image of Heruka and learnt the *mantra* treatises. These Śrāvakas were mostly *Bhiksus* of Siṁhala and what they preached,

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23* *Sambhala-Lam-Yig*, (Hindi version) p. 43. mentions Odantpuri, Rājagṛiha, Nālandā and Vikramaśīla as Vihāras.

पृ० 50— महाराज गोपाल ने पूर्व के देशों को जीतकर अपने राज्य में मिला लिया······ इनके पुत्र देवपति······इसके बाद महाराज धर्मपाल=तिब्बत की राजधानी से इस महाराज के पास अक्सर दूत आते थे······**इन्होंने विक्रमशिला में कूटागार बनवाया तथा वहां के संघों के संचालन का प्रबन्ध किया।**

There are factual errors in this statement with regard to the chronology of the kings of the Pāla dynasty.

generally did not represent the teachings of the Buddha. They converted many new comers from Bengal and other places to their faith—a perverted type of Mahāyānism and Tāntricism. Dharmapāla was determined to take action against them but was restrained by his teacher, Buddhajñānapāda (also the head of the university) to do so. An attempt towards the revival of Hinayānism was also made, in the eigth-ninth centuries, with great vigour so much so that they came to be reckoned with as a factor in the university. In this attempt, the monks of Siṁhala and Sindhu took active part but in the long run they were intellectually overpowered and physically done away with for good. Their suppression paved the way for better functioning of the university. In the beginning even Jñānśrīmitra was a Saindhavaśrāvaka but ultimately he ended as a Tantrayānist. In a Tibetan account of the Buddhist monastaries of the Pāla period, Vikramaśīla figures prominently alongwith Odantpuri, Vajrāsana, Nālandā and Somapura Vihāras. The Pālas were great Buddhists themselves and they tried to give a new turn to their faith by patronising these Vihāras. It goes to the credit of the University of Vikramaśīla that Buddhism was saved from utter destruction till the end of the 12th century A. D.

On account of its close proximity to the seat of the political power of the Pālas, Vikramaśīla had advantageous position and it naturally enjoyed all the benefits of royal protection. It was a royal university and hence its position was comparatively better than others. Besides Dharmapāla, the later Pāla rulers made further liberal grants for the maintenance of this university and it was always the intention of the rulers to see that only men of eminence, irrespective of other things, were appointed as teachers and that the standard was not allowed to deteriorate in any case. The university had a large establishment. We have seen above that Dharmapāla had furnished with four establishments belonging to four principal sects of Buddhism. Endowments were made fixing regular allowances for the maintenance of the teachers and students. There were also establishments for temporary residents. For about four centuries, the university acted as a beacon-light to the many and served as an important international cultural centre in the east. The intellectuals were required not to worry for their maintenance but to remain busy with their intellectual pursuits. Necessary arrangements for their stay and comforts were made by donations of the kings and nobles. In the tenth century A. D., a new *Sattra*, free board and hostel, was added to the university by one of the sons of king Sanātana of Varendra, also known by the name of Jetari, one of the renowned teachers of the university

itself. The Tibetan ruler had also added hostels to the university for the stay of Tibetan students.

The institution at the outset contained about two hundred monks inclusive of the members of all sections of religious classes. The monks were all noted for their scholarship and learning. By the tenth century A.D. the university became one of the most renowned centres of learning in the whole of eastern Asia and in many respects, it had its edge over the University of Nālandā. Students of this university were highly respected in the country and abroad and in matters of royal appointments they got preference over others. Alumni of Vikramśīla shined in all walks of life. At the time when Atisa was appointed in 11th century A. D., it was a full fledged university duly supported and maintained by the Pāla ruler, Nayapāla. Sthavira Ratnākara was the supervisor of the monastery. There was regular intercourse between Nālandā and Vikramaśīla. The front wall at Vikramaśīla was on the right of the principal entrance and there were portraits of Nāgārjuna and Atisa. These portraits were made by the students of the university. On one face of the wall there were drawn images and sketches of the former Paṇḍitas, who had been eminent for their learning and intellectual achievements and appearances. There were also drawings of the *Siddhas* or the Saints. Various scholars have confused the Gupta relief at Patharghata (Popularly known as *Chaurāsīmuni*) with the portraits of the eighty four *Sidhas* but that is not a fact. It depicts scenes from the life of Kṛṣṇa. At the site of the university, there were necessary provisions for the shelter of those who reached late at the gates. The Tibetans were simply struck and astonished at the magnificence and grandeur of the university buildings, tombs and structure. The Tibetans took it as one of the models of their monasteries.

The standard of Vikramaśila was higher than that of Nālandā. The Central Hall was called the house of science and each college was under a *Dwārapḍṇiata*. It has been suggested that there were six different branches of study manned by six scholars in their respective-branches, viz.

(i) Prajñākarmati on the southern gate, (on the western gate according to Rāhulajī).

(ii) Ratnākaraśānti on the eastern gate (also known as Śantipā-well versed in *Vyākaraṇa* and *Nyāya*).

(iii) Vāgiśwarakīrti on the western gate (versed in *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nyāya* and *Kāvya*) (on the southern gate according to Rāhulajī).

(iv) Bhaṭṭāraka Naropānta on the northern gate (versed in *Mahāyāna* and *Tantra*).

(v) Ratnavajra on the first central gate and

(vi) Jñānaśrīmitra on the second central gate.

The last two were also regarded as the pillars of the university. These scholars collectively guarded the high academic standard of the university. Their works are preserved in the Tanjur and Kanjur collections. Students were subjected to severe tests before entering the precints of the university. There were free board and hostels. There were one hundred and eight notable Paṇḍitas on the teaching staff of the University in the beginning besides the Āchāryas and three Superintendents. The post of a Dwārapaṇḍita was of a very high order. The diploma, granted by the university to its distinguished alumni, was conferred by the reigning king. "*Paṇḍita*" was a degree conferred by the university.[24] Ratnavajra, one of the Dwārapaṇḍitas, received such royal diploma and so also Āchārya Jetari from King Mahipāla. Tāranātha gives an account of the Vajrāchāryas of Vikramaśīla monastery. He writes that there were five generations of Vajrāchāryas but there are actually twelve names[25] preceding the six Dwārapaṇḍitas viz. Buddhajñānapāda, Dipaṁkarabhadra, Jayabhadra, Śrīdhara, Bha vabhadra, Bhavyakīrti, Lilāvajra, Dwijanachandra, Kṛṣṇasamayavajra, Tathāgatarakṣita, Bodhiḍbhadra, Kamalarakṣita and then the six Dwārapaṇḍitas.

Besides these Dipaṁkara Śrījñāna, Abhayakaragupta, Subhakaragupta, Jinarakṣita, Dharmaśrīmitra and various others adorned the university. Their association with the university enhanced its academic prestige in the eyes of the contemporary intellectual world. Tilopa, one of the eightyfour *Siddhas*, was the preceptor of Naropa, one of the Dwārapaṇḍitas. His disciple, Māripā founded the Kar-gyupa-sect in Tibet. Āchārya Jetari and Atiśa, Śilākara, Ratnākara, Śākyaśrībhadra and many other reputed persons were, in one way or the other, associated with the university. According to Jayaśila (who had come to take Atiśa to Tibet) there were about one hundred monks at Vikramaśīla and all of them were equally great and reputed scholars. Jetari, Ratnakīrti and Jñānaśrīmitra were the intellectual pillars. During the reign of Rāmapāladeva, Abhayakaradeva was the head of the monastery and it accommodated one hundred and sixty professors and about one thousand

24 S. C. Vidyabhushan—*Medieval Logic* (Calcutta 1909), p. 79.

25 Chapter 38 of Lama Tāranātha's work.

resident monks. The student population varied from one to ten thousands[26].

Ratnākaraśānti of the Śarvāstivāda school of the university of Odantpur was also a student of Jetari and so was Atiśa. Ratñākaıa learnt *Sutras* at Vikramaśīla. He is credited with having authored about a hundred books. At the invitation of the Ceylonese King, he went there and preached Buddhist doctrines. Nālandā also acknowledged the intellectual eminence of this centre of learning and accorded recognition to the degrees awarded by it. In its hey day, it had larger student population than Nālandā. Its standard was higher than all the contemporary institutions and monasteries. Even when decay had set in, say in the latter half of the eleventh century A. D., the erudite scholars of the monastery of Vikramaśīla kept the banner high and drew students from different parts of the world. These teachers were honoured throughout the Buddhist world. The four colleges were located at the four gates with two central colleges inside the campus. The central Hall was reserved for the study of the *Prajñāpāramitāśūtras* and it was in this branch of learning that Vikramaśīla made a name in the field of international Buddhism. The study of *Prajñāpāramitā* is an important element in Mahāyāna Buddhism, enunciated by Nāgārjuna. It signified the highest knowledge. It indicated *Dāna, Śīla, Dhairya, Vīrya, Dhyāna*, and *Prajñā*. According to the *Sthaviravādas*, they are ten in number, and include, besides the above five, *Kohanti* (Forbearance) *Upāyakauśala* (means to know) *Praṇedhan* (resolution), *Bala* (power) and Jñāna (knowledge).

IV

As regards curriculum and courses of studies, it was highly organised and planned according to the needs of a Buddhist University, which was also, at the same time, a religious centre. Both tutorial and professional methods were employed. The courses were planned to suit the contemporary social needs and all streams were thoroughly organised by the specialists in different branches. Tantra was the most important branch of learning. Occult Science and Magic also found favour with the university. Grammar, Metaphysics, Logic were important fields of study. Besides these various other subjects concerning varied fields were also taught. *Hetuvidyā, Chikitsāvidyā, Sabdavidyā, Sāṁkhya, Adhyātmavidyā,*

26 Rajeshwar Jha, Śākyaśrībhadra Kī Jiwanī (Patna—1970); *Cf. Sambhal-Lāma-Yig.*

Silpasthānavidyā, etc. were also taught in details at this university. Buddhism, with all its ramifications, formed the core of studies. *Abhidharma* formed an important part of the course of study. The medium of instruction was Sanskrit and the Buddhist scholars took pride in claiming mastery over the Sanskrit language. There was a very fine library. The gradation of the courses, however, was more systematic than at any other centre.

According to Kern,[27] the doctrine of Buddhism in India from 8th century onwards nearly coincided with the growing influence of Tāntricism and sorcery which stand to each other in relation of theory to practice. Tāntricism is common to both Hinduism and Buddhism. Vikramaśila was a centre of Tāntric studies. This grand monastery emerged during the hey day of Tāntric Buddhism and naturally therefore it became the chief centre for the study of magic and occult sciences. In course of time, the university came to be associated with the study and cultivation of Tāntric Buddhism. Theoritical and practical instructions in different branches of Tāntric studies were imparted here.[27*] The term *mudrā* has the double meaning of "to seal" and of "not to go beyond." The first is given by Maitripā, who says—"The five psycho-somatic constituents are the five *Tathāgatas*"-e.g.-i) corporeality-*Vairochana*, (ii) feeling-*Ratnasaṁbhava*, (iii) Sensation-*Amitābha*, (iv) motivation-*Amoghasiddhi*, (v) consciousness-*Akṣobhya*. A class of Tāntrikas at Vikramaśīla was known by the name of *Kiṁśukas* and they brought much trouble to Atiśa.[28] They indulged in wine and women, magical rites and sorceries, and other attendant vices. Writing condemnatory slogans on the walls, criticising each others on doctrinal matters, and taking recourse to mean things were some of the special features of the *Kiṁśukas*. Their activity had created a stir in the campus for sometime. All types of Tāntric theories were applied on the nuns on one count or the other.

The Buddhist *tantras* proposed to teach the adepts as to how to acquire the desired object, either of material or spiritual interest, in a supernatural way. It also taught to believe in the supernatural way of elixir of layering invulnerability or of evoking a Buddha or Bodhisattva

27 *Manual of Budhism*, p. 133.

27* *Cf.* P. L. Paul, *Early History af Bengal*, pp. 26-27; Elliot, *Hinduism and Buddism*, ii; pp. 111 ff; A. C. Vidyabhushan, *Prāchina Bharater Sanskriti O Sāhitya*, p. 123.

28 *JBTS*, V.

to solve a doubt or doubtful propositions. We learn from Tāranātha that there were many masters of magic, *mantravajrāchāryas* and Tāntrics who performed the most prodigious feat in this renowned centre of Tāntric learning and Tāntric Buddhism. Vikramaśīla had developed into an international centre for the diffusion of Tāntric Buddhism in particular and Indian culture in general. It should be borne in mind here that Nālandā and Vikramaśīla were the greatest centres of Tāntricism. Kamalaśīla, Śāntirakṣita, and Padmasambhava of Nālandā together with Siṁhabhadra (Haribhadra), Jetari, Ratnākaraśānti and Dipaṁkara-śrījñāna were great professors of Tantra in Bihar, who even went to Tibet for the propogation of their thought. Vikramaśīla was, by far, the best Tāntric University patronised by the Pālas of Bengal and Bihar. Many ritualistic books on Tantra and allied subjects were written or compiled at this centre of learning.

The influence of Atiśa was undoubtedly exercised in the direction of an everlasting diffusion of the images illustrating the life of Buddha from Tāntric calamities. The opulent lives of Queen Māyā, the somewhat languid grace of young Bodhisattva (the life of pleasure in women's apartments) show in the details of the dress and of the bodies, the influencs of Magadhan art introduced by Atiśa. It is a well known fact that a few of the important eighty four *Siddhas* belonged to the university of Vikramasīla and they were the precursors of the modern eastern vernaculars of eastern India. These *Siddhas*, though very learned in their respective branches, preached their philosophy in the language of the masses. Their philosophy, in a nutshell, represented the Tantric point of view and it is underlined below—

(i) absolute merger or complete identification with *Śūnya*.

(ii) they ridiculed the worship of images.

(iii) rejected the efficacy of religious baths and pilgrimages to sacred places.

(iv) preached about the ultimate reality saying that Buddha resided in man himself.

(v) they had no love for scholastic discussion.

(vi) they believed that the practice of Yogic exercises would lead to realisation of ultimate truth. According to Devi Prasad Chattopadhyaya, Tāntrika uses and formulas were current and practised in earlier ages and belonged to a type of thought that was primitive (*Lokāyata*, p. 322).

(vii) used sexual symbolism to express these truths.

(viii) rejected the *Varṇāśrama* scheme of life.

(ix) preached equality for all.

Since the days of Buddha, Sariputta and Moggalayana right upto the time of Atiśa Dīpaṃikara, Bihar had the unique honour of being the resort of almost all the veteran scholars in every branch of learning. The Dwārapaṇḍitas of Nālandā and Vikramaśīla were eminent scholars and their works were later studied and commented upon by a host of scholars here and abroad. Standard works on Logic, Grammar, Metaphysics were written at the University of Vikramaśīla and a glance at the works of the teacher of this university would convince even a layman that it was really a centre of learning and culture. There was sufficient scope for inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary research in these universities and students were free to consult any of the specialists at the convenience of both of them.

The Mahāyāna form of Buddhism, perhaps under the influence of aboriginal popular cults in lower strata of society, came to assume a darker and debased form of Tāntricism. This might have resulted from a misunderstanding of the symbolic language and the esoteric texts of the Tāntrik school. Magic, sorceries, secret rites, and rituals introduced into later Buddhism particularly in respect of the female deities, no doubt, alienated the people. In the Māhāyāna school, feminine divinities found their way into the Buddhist pantheon. *Prajñāpāramitā* was the personification of the qualities of Bodhisattva. The theme was like the *Śakti* of the Hindu pantheon. It was thought in sexual unions and sex symbolism were introduced and combined with new magical mysticism. Sorcery, magic, and superstition also played an important part in bringing about this change. The *mantras* constituted the backbone of the Tāntric worship and of the Vajrayāna. Tantra was very popular and the very religious base of the university was Tāntricism, which had its origin amongst various religious and philosophical practices. According to Sten Know the later Mahāyānism was a reawakening of the deepest religious tendencies of the Indian people (*JBORS*, XI, p. 3).

The seeds of Tāntric Buddhism were already present in the original Buddhism in the forms of *Mudrās*, *Maṇḍalas*, *Dhārṇis*, *Samādhis*, and lastly in the worship of Buddha in different poses and also of a host of gods and goddesses. Later on various other theories and practices were introduced. Sheltered behind the doctrine of *Mahāsukhavāda*, some very

gross and hideous acts of immorality were introduced in the name of religion. The Tāntric Buddhists did not find *Mahāsukhavāda* incompatible with indulgence with worldly pleasures. Authorities on Buddhism are of opinion that Buddhist Tāntricism is as good as Hinduism or Saivism in Buddhist garb. It was a sort of religious under-current and had nothing to do originally either with Hinduism or Buddhism in so far as its origin is concerned. *Vajra* or thunderbolt came to acquire a new meaning by attaining magical power. This school came to be known as *Vajrayāna*. It took into account all the good things and incorporated all that was best in Buddhism and also probably Hinduism. It attained great popularity in no time. Every Tāntric image had its own form of worship called *Sādhanā* and it can be traced through the successive stages of the Buddhist literatures.[29] The chief divinities were Tārā, Mātaṅgī, Pisāchī, Yoginī, Ḍākinī etc. The Buddha and the Bodhisattvas were presented in ferocious poses. *'Oṁ Maṇi Padme Huṁ'*[30] (still pronounced in Tibet with reverence) is of sexual significance mystically repeating the divine coitus of the heavenly Buddha and Prajñāpāramitā as Avalokiteśwara and his Tārā. According to *Suraṅgamasamādhiśūtra*, the final extinction is no total annihilation but an inexhaustible fountain head of compassion (*mahākaruṇā*). *Mahākaruṇā* should be taken as *Prajñāśūnyatā* as epitomised in the famous mantra of Avalokiteśwara—*"Oṁ maṇi Padme Huṁ."* It had been insisted in the above *śūtra* that reality is one. According to the doctrine of *Karuṇā* the Bodhisattva should sacrifice everything for the suffering humanity, Through the cult of Avalokiteśwara, the idea of a personal god was being introduced into Buddhism. The Bodhisattva leads the life of a Buddha for the welfare of sentient beings. *Vajrayāna*, the third vehicle, made its appearance in eastern India, Vikramaśīla being its chief centre both for study and practice. It was this form of Buddhism modified by local cults and practices which gained ground in Tibet as a result of the mission sent from the great *Vajrayāna* monastery of Vikramaśīla.

In the Mahāyāna school, we have a reference to Bodhisattva Vajrayanā. It is introduced in the *aṣṭasāhasrika·prajñāpāramitā* and is called *Vajrapāṇi Mahāyakṣa* or the great Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi. In the Gāndhāra relief, Vajrapāṇi is depicted as holding a *Vajra*. Inscribed Vajrapāṇi pillars have been noticed in Central Asia. Various elements

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29 B. Bhattacharya, *Sādhanamālā*, Pl. LXVI—VIII.

30 See my article—*Buddhism as gleaned through Indian Art* in Buddha Jayanti Number of the *JBRS*, 1956.

bring him into close touch with Śiva. Vajrapāṇi representations are also seen in Tibetan Frescoes. Buddhas connection with *Vajra* is traceable to Buddhist sculptures here and abroad. Religion became more and more permeated with the primitive idea of sympathetic magic and sexual mysticism. Tārā and Mātichi came to be associated with this cult. Tārā became a famous female deity and in the region of Magadha Tārā assumed sufficient importance.[31] We find among the inscribed miniature paintings of the two palm-leaf manuscripts a mention of "the Tārā of Vaiśālī in Tīrabhūkti". A serious mysticism surrounded the mystery of the idea of the *prajñāpāramitās* (for which there was an exclusive centre of study at Vikramaśīla) in the *Vajrayāna* school. The Buddha image of Vaiśālī is seated in Vajrāsana pose.

Under the Pālas the *Vajrayāna* school got sufficient royal impetus. A work called *Vajravani*[31*] opens with an invocation to god 'thunderbolt.' It gives the details of a rite called *Vajravrata*. Tārā, Mārichi and others are also armed with *Vajra*. Dhyāni-Bodhisattvas also carry thunderbolt, *for example*, Akṣobhya and Padmapāṇi in the Tibetan and north Indian iconography. A specimen of this type in the Magadha school is the image of Padmapāṇi now preserved in the Indian Museum.[32] It clearly indicates that the mystic weapon was also associated with Padmapāṇi. Buddha's association with *Vajra* is traceable to the later art of Bengal, Bihar and Nepal. In course of time, it came to be associated with sexual mysticism. Sexual symbolisms were introduced combined with a magical mystecism and Dākinīs, Yoginīs, Pisāchinīs, etc. came to be associated with it. The Sahajiyās of Bengal (a class of Vaiṣṇavas) originated from the decadent Buddhism of Bengal and Bihar. Sarahapāda, a contemporary of Dharmapāla, was one of the strongest protagonists of ihe cult of *Vajrayāna*.[33] He was a Bihari and wrote about thirty books on *Vajrayāna* Among other Siddha poets connected with region of Bhagalpur were Jayānandapā, Tilopā, Naropā, Śāntipā (considered to be the greatest scholar among the eightyfour siddhas) who earned the title of *Kalikālasarvajña*, Dharmapā, Mekopā, Chelukpā, Luchikapā, Putulipā, Charpatipā, Champakapā, Vinayaśrī and others. Some of them are renowned in the Buddhist world for their scholarship and learning.

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31 *Cf*. an article on '*Tārā*' by O. C. Ganguly in the *Ramcharita Abhinandan Granth*, Begusarai, 1957.

31 ASB—*MSS. NO. G*—3855.

32 NO. 3798.

33 *Cf*. Introduction to *Dohākoṣa* by Rāhulajī.

Naropā[34] was a disciple of Tilopā. The Tibetan disciple of Naropā Mi-La-Re-Pa, met him first at Fullaharivihāra. It was situated somewhere in North Bihar or Tirhut.[34*] Fullahari was also known as Puṣpahari. He stayed here for six years and the place is famous in the history of Tibetan Buddhism because it was here that *Mar-pa* received instructions from Naropā. Naropā spread the Buddhist doctrine far and wide. Round him gathered innumerable seekers of knowledge. He wrote several works on *Guhyasamājatantra*, *Abhidhāna-Uttaratantra Hevajratantra* and many works on *Sūtras* and *Tantra* at Fullaharivihāra. It was at Naropā's instance that his Tibetan disciple went to Kukkuripā for study. Naropā finally settled at Vikramaśīla. Vinayaśrī alongwith his friends Bibhutichandra, Dānaśīla, Sugatiśrī and others translated a large number of Sanskrit texts into Tibetan. Vinayaśrī also composed a number of songs in Maithili, as was spoken then in the region around Vikramasīla in the beginning of the thirteenth century A. D.—a variety of eastern Maithili. Some of his songs have been collected in Rāhula Sānkrityāyana's *Dohākoṣa*[35]. From Vinayaśrī's writings, it is evident that Maithili was cultivated by the *Siddhas* and they used it as the medium for mass propaganda. The *Siddhas*[36] belonged to *Sahajayāna* School, an amalgam of Mahāyānism, Tāntricism and Śaivism. The cultural atmosphere of the *Siddhacharyā Padas* finds its eloquent expression in Jyotirīśwara[37]. Of all the Tantras, *Guhyasamāja*, *Chakrasaṁvara* and *Hevajra* were important here in this country and *Kālachakra* in Tibet. The *Guhyasa-*

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34 H. V. Guenther, *Life and Teachings of Naropa.*

34* *G. D. College Bulletin Series No. 2* (Edited by R. K. Choudhary).

35 निमूल तरुवर डालन पाती
निर्भर फुल्लिल पेखु विश्राती ।।
भणइ विणयश्री तोखौ तरुवर। फुल्लए करुणा फलइ अणुत्तर।
करुणामोदें सपलवि तोसए। फलसंपतिएँ से भव नासए।
से चिन्तामणि जे जइ सबासए। से फल मेलएनहिए साँसए।
वरगुरु भन्तिएँ चित्त पवोही। तहि फल लेहु अनुतर बोही।
गोल्लिअहु गिरि सिहरि जातें। तहि झंपाविल्ली कलि के अन्ते।
हल कि करम सहिएँ पक्केलि। विसरे राइ लेल्लहि पेल्ली।
तहि झंपइ ट्ठोल्लि हरुअमेले। विसअ सिलइल्लिमा छाडिय।
भणइ विणयश्री वरगुरु वयणे। नाइन मेल्लए के गमणे।

36 Earliest being Sarahpā and the latest being Dhendapā.

37 *Cf.*—Description of *Siddhas* in *Varṇanaratnākara.* Also S. B. Dasgupta, *An introduction of Tantric Buddhism.* For references to *MSS* on *Hevajra* and *Kālachakratantra*, p. 152.

māja-tantra,[37*] one of the oldest Buddhist Tāntric documents, defines Tantra as follows, "Tantra is continuity and three fold : Ground, Actuality, and Inalienableness. Actuality is immanent causality, Inalienableness is the effect. Ground is the process". Naropā has explained it in his own way. It has been described as the affirmation of the absolute unity of reality and of its being known directly. *'Tantra'* is training that follows a definite plan as a result of which wider horizons of reality are revealed. Naropā was one of the brilliant exponents of this type of 'Tantra' training.

Under the Pālas, the monks at Nālandā, Odantpuri and Vikramaśīla cultivated with success various kinds of arts, necessary for the decoration of sacred buildings. They established a new school of art known as eastern school of medieval sculpture and medieval school of metal sculpture. Pāla bronzes are so numerous that there is hardly any scope for doubt that they were produced in abundance. A bronze image of Avalokiteśwara has recently been discovered from Vikramaśīla. The Pāla bronzes, produced in Magadha, were exported to south east Asia, Nepal, Tibet and China. By this time iconographical canons of every god, alongwith his attributes, were fixed. Buddhist iconography acted as a fountain head of Tibetan and Chinese genius. Nālandā and Vikramaśīla developed a distinctive symbol of manuscript painting. The Palm leaf *MSS* were also painted. These paintings depict a marked Tāntric influence. Though they are characterised by sensuous elegance, they display a sense of high technical skill and show conspicuous delicacy and charm. Tibet and Nepal received from Vikramaśīla not only Mahāyāna religion and philosophy but also Indian art which deeply affected their own. The Buddhists of the Vikramaśīla and other monasteries of Bihar developed the latest form of *Vajrayāna* with the result that their influence on every aspect of Indian life declined and to a great extent was absorbed into different minor and insignificant cults. Atiśa, as Tāntric, is known as *Guhyajñānavajra*. Some of the current practices of the Tantra and various other unhealthy developments at Vikramaśīla and other Vihāras contributed to the decline of Buddhism is general and the Vihāras in particular. Various manuscripts on all aspects of Tantras were prepared at Vikramaśīla monastery by teachers and students and some of them are yet available in Tibetan translations, the list of which has been published by the Late Mahāpaṇḍita Rāhula Sānkrityāyana[38].

37* B. Bhattacharya (edited), *Guhyasamājatantra* GOS, Baroda, 1931, p. 153. *Cf.* D. L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajratantra.*

38 *Cf. Catalogue of Tibetan Texts in the Bihar Research Society.*

V

Monastic education had made remarkable progress in the beginning of the ninth century A. D. and the Pālas had given sufficient impetus to this type of education. In matters of standard and gradation of courses, Vikramaśīla had certain edge over other universities of the day. It had a galaxy of eminent teachers. Since the days of the founder teacher, Buddhajñānapāda, the university had a series of eminent intellectuals, all distinguished in their own branches and well known internationally for their erudition. In one of the sources it has been suggested that Vikramaśīla Mahāvihāra was encircled by a wall which was probably built by one Buddhajñāna Pratiṣṭa and within the enclosure there were fifty eight institutions with one hundred and eight Professors. Outside the surrounding wall there were one hundred and seven temples[38*]. Whether the two were the one and the same person it is difficult to say. It is in respect of teachers and mode of teaching that its standard is believed to be higher than that of Nālandā and other contemporary universities. Even the last abbot, the famous Kashmiri scholar, Śāksyaśrībhadra, was equally eminent and taught at Vikramaśīla for about a decade and later at Tibet. There was cooperation between the different universities and the teachers of one university could join the other universities without any difficulty. Atiśa held the keys of many monasteries in Magadha. Teachers and scholars from different parts of the country were invited, for example, Jetari belonged to Varendra, Ratnavajra and Śākyaśrī to Kashmir, Vāgiśwara to Benares and so on. Vairochana went to Vikramaśīla from Nālandā and from there to Tibet; Ratnākara went to Vikramaśīla from Odantapurī and then on to Ceylon. Ratnavajra also went to Tibet. Standard works on different subjects were written by all of them.

Haribhadra (Siṁhabhadra), a pupil of Śāntirakṣita, prepared a series of works on *Pāramitā*, according to the views of his teacher. He quotes Diṅnāga and Dharmakirti. The study of *Pāramitā*, according to Haribhadra, presupposes that of *Pramāṇa* as well as *Mādhyamaka* and *Abhidharma*. In Tibet, he is regarded as the principal source for the interpretation of Maitreya's *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, the basic text on *Pāramitā*. He utilises three means of knowledge *viz*, perception, inference and tradition (*Āgama*) and he regards *Āgama* as an independent means of knowledge. His other works are *Pañcaviṁśati-Sāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā*;

38* S. C. Das, *Indian Panditas in the Land of Snow* (1965), pp. 60-61; *Pag-Sam-Jon-Zang*, p. 113.

Ārya-aṣṭa-sāhasrikā - Prajñāpāramitā - vyākhyāna; *abhisamayālaṁkāra-ālokanāma*; *Bhagwata - ratnaguṇa - Saṁchya - gāthā - pañjikānāma*. His disciple, Buddhajñānapāda, continued the work of his teacher in expounding the theory of *pāramitā* and is believed to have been the author of *Guhyasamājatantra*, a valuable treatise on the *Mantrayāna*. In course of time the teachers of the *Pāramitā* school became more and more concerned with *Mantrayāna* and the activity of the syncretistic trend reached its peak in the time of the Pāla ruler, Mahipāla. Ratnakīrti wrote a commentary on *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and his pupil, Ratnākaraśānti wrote two more such commentaries. Prajñākaramati wrote a commentary on *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and also on Śāntideva's *Bodhisattva*. Prajñākara's *Bodhicharyāvatārapañjikā* is available in Tibetan. Abhayākara Gupta is regarded as one of the greatest teachers of Mahāyāna and Mantrayāna and he is revered in Tibet as an incarnation of Amitābha. He, alongwith Ratnākarśānti, should perhaps be looked upon as the final systematiser of the Mādhyamikā-Mantrayāna synthesis which appears to have been the last great movement of Buddhism in India, originating from Vikramaśīla and ultimately culminating in Tibet. He also wrote a commentary on *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and also a series of works on *Mantrayāna*[38†]. He was an eminent teacher of the university of Vikramaśīla in the 12th century A. D. and was noted for his scholarship. Some of his important works are

(i) *Kaśyapaparivartaṭīkā*
(ii) *Akṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā*
(iii) *Amitābhavyūha*
(iv) *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Vrītti*
(v) *Daśabhūmivyākhyāna*
(vi) *Laṅkāvatāravrītti*
(vii) *Nirvāṇaśāstra*

All in Tibetan. There are many more books in Tibetan by this author and it is not possible to include the exhaustive list here for want of space.

The *Mantrayāna* texts include—

(i) *Mahāsannipāta*[39]
(i) *Bhaisajyaguru*[40]

38† Tucci has edited *Abhisamayālaṅkārāloka*, *GOS*, 1932.

39 *Gilgit MSS* Vol IV, (Calcutta, 1959).

40 *Gilgit MSS*. Vol 1 (Shrinagar, 1939).

(iii) *Ekādaśamukha, Hayagrīva vidyā* and *Sarvatathāgatādhiṣṭhāna Vyuha*[41]

(iv) *Mañjuśrīmūla*[42]

(v) *Guhyasamāja*[43]

(vi) *Hevajra*[44]

(vii) *Ḍākārṇava*[45]

(viii) *Śādhanamālā*[46]

(ix) *Nispannayogāvali*[47]

There are many more works.

Abhayākaragupta also commented upon the '*Kālachakra*'. The Mahāyāna-Mādhyamikā doctrine was put into final form by Abhayākaragupta and a host of others including Bibhūtichandra who escaped to Tibet, after the fall of Vikramaśīla.

The Madhyamika writers include Parahita and Prajñākaramati. Parahita is credited with having composed the following works—

(i) *Maṇḍala-abhiśekha-vidhi.*

(ii) *Sūnyatāsaptati vivriti.*

(iii) *Sūtra-alaṁkārādi-śloka-dvaya-vyākhyāna.*

Jetāri developed the theory of knowledge at an elementary level. Prajñākaragupta completed Dharmakirti's own work by writing a most elaborate commentary on the three chapters of *Pramāṇavārtika*. His works included many original contributions. His *Pramāṇavārṭīkābhāsya* or *Alaṁkāra* has been edited by Rāhulajī. Jetāri wrote a whole series of monographs on Dharmakīrti. His important works include—

(i) *Hetutattvopadeśa*[48]

(ii) *Dharmādharmaviniśchaya* (Tibetan)

(iii) *Bālāvatāratarka* (Tibetan)

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41 *Ibid.*

42 Edited by Ganpati Sastri in *TSS* (1920—25), 3 Vols.

43 Edited by B. Bhattacharya in *GOS*, 1931.

44 Edited by D. Snellgrove, 2 Vols, London 1959.

45 Edited by N. N. Choudhary, Calcutta, 1935.

46 Edited by B. Bhattacharya, 2 Vols. *GOS*, 1925-28.

47 Edited by Bhattacharya, *GOS*, 1949.

48 Edited by Tucci, 1956.

(iv) *Sahopalambha prakaraṇa*[49]
(v) *Nairātmyaśiddhi*[50]
(vi) *Jātinirākaraṇa* (Sanskrit)[51]
(vii) *Vādasthāna*[52]
(viii) *Maṇḍalavidhi* and many others in the Tanjur collection.

In the eleventh century, Jñānaśrīmitra wrote a long series of monographs on controversial topics, designed to establish the doctrine of Dharmakīrti and Prajñākārgupta[53] inspite of all the criticism of Brāhmaṇa logicians. He was followed by his student, Ratnakīrti[54] and various other writers including Ratnākaraśānti, author of *Antarvyāptisamarthana*[55] and also of *Chhandoratnākara*. The *Pramāṇa* school survived in Tibet. Even the Śrāvakas, who formed the majority, acknowledged the greatness of the Mahāyāna-Mantrayāna teacher, Abhayākaragupta. The works of Jñānaśrīmitra include—

(i) *Kṣaṇabhaṅgādhyāya*
(ii) *Vyāpticharchā*
(iii) *Bhedābhedaparīkṣā*
(iv) *Anupalabdhiratasyam*
(v) *Sarvaśabdābhāva charchā*
(vi) *Apohaprakaraṇa*
(vii) *Īśvaravāda*
(viii) *Kāryakāraṇabhāvasiddhi*
(ix) *Yoginirṇayaprakaraṇam*
(x) *Advaitavinduprakaraṇam*
(xi) *Sākārasiddhiśāstram*
(xii) *Sārasaṁgrahasūtram*

Works of Ratnavajra

(i) *Herukasādhananāma*
(ii) *Cakrasaṁvaramaṅgalagāthā*
(iii) *Cakrasaṁvarastotra*
(iv) *Hevajrastotra*
(v) *Mahāmāyāsādhana*

Works of Bodhibhadra

(i) *Rahasyā-ananda-Tilaka*
(ii) *Yoga-Satya-lakṣaṇa*
(iii) *Bodhisat va Saṁvara viddhi*
(iv) *Samādhi-ambhāra-parivrata*
(v) *Jñānasārasamuccayanibandhana.*

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49 Manuscript copy in the Bihar Research Society Library, Patna.
50 Ibid.
51 Edited by G. Tucci in the *ABORI*, XI, 1930.
52 Edited by H. R. R. Aiyangar, Madras, 1944.
53 *Cf. Jñānśrīmitranibandhāvalī* edited by Dr. A. L. Thakur, Patna, 1959.
54 *Cf Ratnakīrtinibandhāvalī*, edited by A. L. Thakur, Patna, 1957.
55 Edited by H. P. Shastri, *BI* series, Calcutta, 1910.

Naropā wrote a whole series of works on Tantra. His famous work is *Paramārthasaṁgrahanāma-Sekoddeśaṭīkā*[56]. His teaching, as contained in his *Dohās* and *Charyās*, is essentially the same as that of latter *Mantrayāna* but it is also regarded as Sahajayāna. Naropā originally belonged to Fullahari Vihāra in North Bihar and I am tempted to identify it with the one which stands blurred in the Naulagarh Inscription No. 2[56*]. It was one of the most respelendant Vihāras of North Bihar and many books were written and translated here in this Vihāra. It is from this Vihāra that Naropā moved to Vikramaśīla. The following works of Naropā are preserved in the Tanjur collection—

(i) *Śrīhevajrasādhana.*
(ii) *Ratnaprabhā.*
(iii) *Ekavīraherukasādhana*
(iv) *Śrīguhyaratnachintāmaṇi*
(v) *Vajrayoginīsādhana*
(vi) *Dharmābhiśekha-mārgasantati*
(vii) *Śrīdevīkālīsādhana*
(viii) *Vajragiti.*
(ix) *Pañcakramasaṅgrahaprakāśa*
(x) *Śrīcakrasaṁvaropa-deśamukhakarṇaparaṁparā Chintāmaṇi*
(xi) *Karṇatantravajrapāda.*

More than thirty works are attributed to him. He was a disciple of Tilopā and a teacher of Atiśa and Jñānākara. *Mārpā-do-pa* received his blessings in Tirhut where he is believed to have bestowed six doctrines on Marpā. Śāntipā and Maitripā heard Tantra from him. Naropā's important disciples included Maitripā, Śāntibhadra, Dombipā, Śāntipā, Prajñāsiṁha and non-Buddhists like Śāntivarmana, Jñānākara, Sumatikīrti, Devacandra, Nāgakirti. Nagarjuna's pupil Maitripā also known as Advayavajra wrote *Chaturmudropadeśa* and *Advayavajra Saṁgraha*[57]. Jñānapāda wrote a number of books on the Tantras. Vairochana's *Ratnavādachakra*, Ratnavajra's *Yuktiprayoga*, Ratnākaraśānti's *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* and *Antaravyāpti* and Abhayākaragupta's *Munimahālaṁ-*

56 Edited by Carelli, *GOS*, 1941.

56* R. K. Choudhary, *G. D, College Bulletin Series No. 2*; *Cf.* N. R. Ray, *Bangalir Itihasa*, p. 728.

57 Edited by H. P. Sashtri, *GOS*, 1927.

kāra are some of the important works of Buddhist religion and Philosophy, produced by the University of Vikramaśīla. Jina was the author of *Pramāṇavārtikālaṁkāraṭikā*, the Tibetan version of which was prepared by Atiśa. Prajñākaramati wrote *Prajñāpāṭhaparicchedа*.

Jetāri was also a student of Vikramaśila (became a teacher later on). He secured the title of '*paṇḍita*' from the University (the highest diploma) by the reigning king Mahipāla. He was a devotee of Manjūśrī. His contemporary was Prajñākargupta and also Jñānaśrī mitra. Atiśa was a student of Jetāri. Jñanaśrī at first belonged to the Śrāvaka School but in course of time, he was drawn towards Mahāyāna. Atiśa was very much indebted to him for his intellectual eminence. The Tibetan translation of Jñānaśrī's '*Kāryakāraṇabhāvasiddhi*' (cause and effect) was prepared by an Indian scholar sage named Kumārakalaśa. Jñānaśrī had no rival in Logic at that time and his authority as a logician was accepted by his friends and foes alike. Ratnavajra was also the recipient of the royal diploma of Paṇḍita at Vikramaśīla. Ratnākaraśānti was also known simply as Śāntipā. He learnt *Śūtras* and *Tantras* at Vikramaśīla from Āchārya Jetāri, Ratnakīrti and others. He defeated the *Tīrthika* disputants when he was acting as a *Dvārapaṇḍita* at Vikramaśīla. He is reported to be the author of about a hundred books. Yāmari was also one of the recpients of the title of Paṇḍita at Vikramaśīla. He was wellversed in Grammar and Logic and the author of *Pramāṇavārtikālaṁikāraṭīka*.

The Tibetan Mission which had come to take Atiśa to Tibet found all the six eminent teachers (Ratnākarśānti, Jñānaśrī Mitra, Naropānta, Vajra, Vāgiśvarakīrti, Prajñākaramati) and Atisa, Vidyākokila and Vīravajra at the height of their prestige. Vidyākokila was a disciple of Chandrakīrti and preceptor of Atiśa. Naropānta was one of Chief exponents of '*Vinaya*' rules and he was also a teacher of Atiśa. Ratnākara was famous for his unbounded scholarship and Vīravajra was one of the greatest authorities on *Tantraśāstra*. After the departure of Atiśa, Jetari, Jñānaśrīmitra, Ratnavajra, Ratnakīrti, Śākyaśrībhadra and others dominated the scene at Vikramaśīla. Among the famous disciples of Naropā were Prajñārakṣita, Atiśa, Kanakaśrī, Mānakaśrī and others. Advayavajra is also associated in one way or the other, with the University of Vikramśīla. His original name was Dāmodara, soon changed as Martabodha or Amṛtabodha. He finished all the Brāhmaṇical Śāstras at the age of eighteen. For the study of Buddhist sciences, he came to Naropā. He also read with *Kalikālasarvājña* Ratnākaraśānti. He had met Naropā at Fullahari Vihāra and this shows that Naropā had come to Vikramaśīla

from Fullahari. Advayavajra later studied with Jñānaśrīmitra. This shows that his relation with Vikramaśīla was very close and intimate. He was initiated into Buddhism at Vikramaśīla under Maitrigupta. Later he was initiated into *Siddhi* by Sabarapāda who changed his name to Advayavajra. He was leading his life in isolation at Rājagṛiha when Atiśa met him. Some of his works are still preserved in the Tanjur collections—

(i) *Abodhabodhaka*
(ii) *Gurumaitrīgītikā*
(iii) *Chaturmudropadeśa*
(iv) *Chittamātradṛṣṭi*
(v) *Dohātattva*
(vi) *Chaturvargagītikā*

Works of Ratnākarśānti or Śāntipā are—

(i) *Sukha-Duḥkh-Draya-parityāgadriṣṭi*
(ii) *Prajñāpāramitā-upadeśa*
(iii) *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*
(iv) *Antarvyāpti*
(v) *Mādhyamaka-Alaṁkāra-Upadeśa.*

and many others are preserved in the Tanjur collections.

Works of Vāgīśvarakīrti are—

(i) *Mṛtyuvañcana upadeśa*
(ii) *Sapta Aṅga*
(iii) *Tattva-ratna-āloka*
(iv) *Vajrapāṇisādhana*
(v) *Samayatārastava.*

Other university teachers of eminence included Śāntibhadra, Maitripā, Abadhutipā, Dombipā, Sthavirabhadra, and Smṛtyaratnākarasiddhi (a Kashmiri Paṇḍita). Mahāvajrāsana (born at Malwa) was the abbot of Vikramaśīla and his disciple, Ratnākaragupta who also became a monk of the University and Śānti, of Magadha, became a *Sthavira* Āchārya of this university. Āchārya Abhayākaragupta, a great teacher and scholar of Tantra, became the abbot of *Vajrāsana*, Nālandā and Vikramaśīla. He wrote a commentary in eight thousand verses on the *Prajñāpāramitā*. Many of his books were translated into Tibetan by Buddhakīrti. Abhayākaragupta hailed from Deoghar[58]. His works related to the commentaries

58 *Cf.* R. Sankrityāyana *Tibet Me Baudhadharma* p 42 —The renowned Buddhist scholar 'Ānandagarbha' was also a student of Vikramaśīla.

on 8000 Pāramitās, *Vinaya*, Logic and Madhyama. He wrote a commentary on *Saṁpuṭa* known as *Upadeśa-Mañjarī Vajamālā* where all the Maṇḍala of Sādhanā are described. He was the author of more than fifty works—

(i) *Munimatālaṁkāra*

(ii) *Vajrāvali*

(iii) *Vajrāvalināma-Maṇḍala-Sādhanā* etc.

He was the chief disciple of Abadhutipā and Sauripā and he himself was the preceptor of the Pāla king, Rāmapāla. Rakṣita, Tathāgatagupta, Kamalakuliśa, Narendraśrījñāna, Dānarakṣita, Subhākaragupta, Śūnyakaśrī, Dharmākaraśānti, and various others were all associated with the university of Vikramaśīla. If Buddhajñānapāda was the founder, Śākyaśrī was the last abbot of the university. Forty seven important works on different aspects of Buddhism are attributed to Līlāvajra. Vairochanbhadra is also credited with having written a number of works including some on *Tantra*. His extant works are—

(i) *Bodhisattvacaryāvatārapañjikā*

(ii) *Śiṣyalekhāṭippaṇa*

(iii) *Śikṣā-Kusuma-Mañjarī*

Ānandgarbha, a student of Vikramaśīla is credited with having written about twenty two works, viz.—

(i) *Paramādivritti*

(ii) *Paramādiṭīkā*

(iii) *Mahāvatyāli*

(iv) *Paramādimaṇḍala-Vidhi-nāma*

(v) *Pratiṣṭhāvidhi*

(vi) *Prajñā-pāramitā-Maṇḍala-Upāyikā.*

(vii) *Mārici-devī-sādhanā,* etc.

We shall devote a few lines on the achievements of Atiśa and Śākyaśrī at proper place in the following pages. Only eminent scholars and persons of high moral character were appointed as teachers of this university. Students from Varendra (Bangladesha) and Kashmir, and from Tibet and south-east Asia used to flock here for intellectual enlightenment and the number of foreign students here was greater than Nālandā.

Admission to the university was by intellectual disputations with the *Dvārapaṇḍitas* and rigid rules for admission were of a very high order. The University was meant only for those who wanted to continue their higher studies and research in their branches. The intellectual giants of the University manned the gates and they were regarded as pillars. There was a cordial and intimate relationship between the teacher and the taught. Every new entrant had to be kept under a *Bhikṣu* for sometime. The Buddhist ideal[59] of a teacher considering his pupil as a son was practised both in letter and spirit at Vikramaśīla. The younger monks were expected to show proper behaviour and etiquette. A pupil had to work under a teacher in a monastery. Apart from studies and monastic duties, he should also act as a personal attendant of his *Guru*. Itsing says that these rules were in vogue in the Buddhist monasteries in the 7th century A. D. It is presumed that these rules were followed at Vikramaśīla. The teacher and the taught were united by mutual reverence, confidence, communion of life and a real state of self discipline obtaining in the campus. Besides a close contact between the teacher and taught, the idea of serving the teacher pervaded the atmosphere.

The personality of a teacher wielded a great influence in building up the character of a student and also in developing his mental outlook. Individual attention was an accomplished fact at Vikramaśīla. The atmosphere created an intellectual enthusiasm. Discussions and debates formed part of teaching and the entire community of the University were seekers of truth and knowledge. The regular discussions, held over there, trained intellect, encouraged habits of laborious subtlety, heroic industry and intense application. Vikramaśīla discharged the functions of a real ideal University and it enabled its students to learn the great art of living. It would not be inappropriate to suggest that the intellectual centre of Vikramaśīla was nothing more than the extended shadows of eminent scholars whose very names added glamour to the University. The prominent Sthaviras of the University, including Atiśa, and Jñānaśrī, Śilākara and Śākyaśrī, were the repositories of knowledge (in different branches).

It would be worthwhile if somebody takes up the work of compiling a list of Buddhist teachers of Bihar down to the thirteenth century A. D. on the model shown by S. Dutta[60]. The members of the teaching staff were assigned to different jobs besides teaching *for example*,

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59 *Cf.* *Mahāvagga.*

60 *Cf.* S. Datta. *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries in India.*

(i) Ordination of the novices,

(ii) distribution of food etc.

(iii) supervision of servants

(iv) assignment of monastic activities

(v) Looking to the maintenance of general peace in the campus.

It appears that though living in the same campus, all could not contact the eminent scholars without fixing a time. Most of the Tibetans who had been studying here, for years, had not seen all the scholars of the University. There were certain prescribed rules regarding meetings and interviews. The monks led a very simple life. The Professors were known as *Āchāryas* and the head of a monastic establishment was known as *Adhyakṣa.* The *Adhyakṣas* and the *Dwārapālas* were appointed by the king and prominent among the Adhyakṣas, besides the *Dwārapālas* were Buddhajñānapāda, Jetāri, Dīpaṁkar Śrījñāna, Abhayākaragupta and Śākyaśrī. While Nālandā was organised on democratic lines, managed by the scholars themselves, Vikramaśīla was a royal University under the Pālas and the business of the university was subject to the approval of the king. Here king himself was the Chancellor. The general administration, however, was vested in a council presided over by the Chief abbot of the university.

Teachers and students occupied themselves in copying the manuscripts for the university library. Most of such manuscripts were burnt or destroyed and some of them were taken to Tibet and Nepal by the fleeing scholars. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Gopāla II of the Pāla dynasty a manuscript of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikaprajñāpāramitā* was written at Vikramaśīla—this is now preserved in the British Museum. Several such manuscripts were written, compiled, copied and painted at Vikramaśīla, and some of them are still preserved in Nepal and Tibet. Vikramaśīla's contact with Tibet becomes evident if one simply goes through the contents of the list of Manuscripts published by Rāhul Sānkrityāyana. Vikramaśīla had intimate connections with Tibet and those who went to Tibet carried with them the treasures of knowledge from Vikramaśīla and there they translated the same into Tibetan. Among the religious establishments sponsored by Dharmapāla, both Tāranātha and Sum Pa mentioned only Vikramaśīla by name. At that time *Prajñāpāramitā* and *Samāja* were widely spread. There was indeed regular intercourse between Vikramaśīla and Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. Though they

maintained their monastic character throughout, they also imparted education on secular subjects. The pupils were also trained in arts and crafts.

We have in the Tibetan account[61] a graphic description of the religious assembly at Vikramaśīla corresponding to a sort of convocation. The account in the Tibetan source is as follows—

> "In the morning at eight O'clock when the monks congregated together, being conducted by a Sthavira, I was given a seat in the rank of learners. Then first of all, the venerable Vidyākokila came to preside over the assembly. His appearance was noble and majes ic. He go exalted and steady like the Sumeru mountain. I asked those near me if he was not lord Atiśa. 'What do you say, O Tibetan Āyuṣmat, this is the very revered Lāmā Vidyākokila, who, being a lineal disciple of Āchārya Chandrakīrti, has become a saintly sage. Do you not know that he was the teacher of Atiśa'. Then again pointing to another Āchārya who was seated at the head of a row, I enquired if he was not Atiśa, I was told that he was venerable Naropānta, who, for scholarship in sacred literature, had no equal among the Buddhists. He too was Atiśa's teacher. Another Paṇḍita came in grave and solemn mood moving lowly. The king also rose from his seat to do him honour.... Thinking that he must be Atiśa himself, I wished to know who he was. I was told that he was Vīravajra......When I interrogated how learned he was, they said they were not aware of the extent of his attainments. When all the rows of seats were filled up, then came Lord Atiśa, the venerable of venerables, in all his glory......There was brightness mixed with simplicity of expression on his face which acted as a magic spell upon those[62] who beheld him". *Sambhala-Lam-Yig* mentions the names of Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna, Vidyākokila, Abhayākara, Śākyaśrī as persons entrusted with the task of carrying forward the heritage of Buddha.[63] The assembly, referred to above, was attended among others by the ruling Pāla King, Nayapāla.

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61 *Cf.* R. K. Choudhary, *Bihar the Homeland of Buddhism.*

62 *Cf.* S. C. Das, *Indian Panditas in the land of Snow*; J. N. Sammaddar, *Op. Cit.*

63 *Op. Cit.* (Hindi Version) p., 55.

The University had a bunch of literary celebrities who flourished under the royal patronage for about four hundred years. It is impossible to gauge the depth of scholarship of each of them. A list of teachers of Vikramaśīla is maintained in the Tibetan tradition. It should be noted that at Vikramaśīla, intellectuals and teachers were more respected than the rulers and other authorities. We have it from the Tibetan source that when the Rājā (possibly Nayapāla of the Pāla dynasty) came to take his exalted seat in the religious gathering, none of the members, old or young, rose from their seat to mark his arrival. But whenever any scholar came, the Āyuṣmatas rose from their seat to do him the honour and mark his arrival. The Āyuṣmatas received the scholars with the offerings of incense. Even the Rājā had to rise from his seat to do him the honour whenever a scholar came. These scholars were the repositories of Buddhist culture. The university was open to scholars and monks from all parts of the world. These teachers were the cultural leaders of the time and so long they remained there, the Buddhist philosophy and way of life reigned supreme. The *Dvārapaṇḍitas* were eminent Logicians and they evoked criticism from Maithila scholars.

In these days, the system of *Śāstrārtha* (intellectual disputation) was the yardstick of scholarship and anybody interested in establishing his reputation as a scholar had to prove his bonafide in this manner. As a rule the Buddhists had to hold a debate with those of other philosophical systems and the scholars of Vikramaśīla were well adept in this art. An announcement of the debate was made at least fifteen days earlier and scholars of all shades of opinion were invited to participate. The king normally used to preside over such meetings.

Both the Buddhists and the Hindus participated in such debates. Naropā is believed to have been involved in such an intellectual disputation and the Hindus discussed with the Buddhists the problems relating to grammar, epistemology, spiritual precepts and logic. Non-Buddhists were defeated. The Hindus, after being defeated by the Buddhists, adopted Buddhism. Each *Guru* of the age represented the sum total of the philosophical quest of his period. The stream of the *ultimate* at Vikramaśīla flowed through the great philosophical tradition represented by Tilopā, Naropā, Mār pā, Mila-Ras-Pā and Śākyaśrī.

It would not be out of place here to discuss the philosophical base of the university which extended the frontiers of knowledge. There were important Buddhist monasteries on the other side of the Ganges like Odantapuri, Nālandā and Vikramaśīla, all manned by the eminent

Buddhist teachers of the time and there lay on the left bank of the Ganges the great cultural centre of philosophy and learning, Mithilā, where philosophers and thinkers were busy refuting the ideology of *Anātmavāda* preached by the Buddhist. It was in a sense a struggle between the Hindu Idealists and Buddhist Realists or Materialists. From a study of the contemporary sources, it is evident that both of them read the respective philosophies and applied their mind in controverting each other. The discussion between the two sects started early but between A. D. 800 and 1200 (when Vikramaśīla was in existence) it became sharper leading two different and distinct schools of logic representing Idealism and Realism. Vikramaśīla was at that time the centre of *Tantrayāna, Vajrayāna, Mahāyāna, Sahajayāna* etc. and Mithilā was the centre of Vedic culture and classical philosophy. Mithilā lay on way to Nepal and Tibet and as such it had regular contacts with all incoming and outgoing scholar. It was also comparatively free from early Muslim raids and naturally fleeing scholars took resort in Mithilā[64]. The discussions and debates between orthodox Maithila scholars and Buddhist scholars of Magadha produced far reaching results in the realm of knowledge.

Vācaspati was the master of all the six systems of philosophy. In his *Nyāyavārtika* he has defended Udyotakara against the charges of Dignāgāchārya. In this connection it should be borne in mind that Gautama's philosophy was criticised by Nāgārjuna but they were refuted by Vātsyāyana in his *Nyāyabhāṣya.* Vātsyāyana was attacked by Dignāga and the latter by Udyotakara in his *Nyāyavārtika.* Udyotakara was attacked by Dharmakīrti. The Buddhist thinkers were ably refuted by Vācaspati[65], who has been rightly regarded as the saviour of Hindu thought and philosophy in Mithilā. Without him Mithilā would have lost the eminence in the realm of Philosophy. Vācaspati was strongly criticised by the Buddhists who were taken to task by Udayanāchārya. He vigorously defended *Nyāya* against the attacks of Buddhist Logicians. In his *Ātmatattva-viveka,* he tries to establish the existence of *Ātman* by refuting the theory of *Ānātmavāda*[66] of the Buddhist. He tries to prove

64 *Cf.* R. K. Choudhary, *Mithila in the age of Vidyāpati, History of Muslim Rule in Tirhut, History of Bihar*; R. R. Diwakar (edited), *Bihar through the ages.*

65 *Puratattva Nibandhāvali*—Rahulji pays rich tributes to Vācaspati, as a Naiyāyika, and for his versatility. Udayanāchārya and Pārthasārthi Miśra have literally followed, rather copied, the style of Prajñākaragupta.

66 No-Soul theory.

logically the existence of God in his *Nyāyakusumāñjalī*. He has been rightly regarded as one of the greatest exponents of theism in Mithilā.

It is said that Kumārila, whose sister Bhāratī was married to Maṇḍana of Mithilā, was determined to bring Buddhism to an end. He was a supporter of Vedic *Karmakāṇḍa* and they looked down upon the Buddhists, who were generally scorned by the Brāhmaṇas. Udayana was equally determined to root out the Buddhists. He has given eight or ten reasons for persons being converted into Buddhism and some reasons are quoted below-"...men incapable of earning their livelihood enter the Buddhist Churches in the hope of an easy going life...............some fools including Dipaṁkara were drawn to the Buddhist faith[67]........."

This generalised estimate, in my opinion, may be only partially true for some cowards or the like who flourish in every age. The real reason was that the orthodox people were losing faith and the orthodox leaders their influence on the masses. It must be remembered that the Buddhist monasteries entertained everybody who wished to join them and there was no restriction whatsoever. That repleted the strength of the orthodox people and they, out of anger and on account of the popularity of the Buddhists, abused their opponents in a most inappropriate language. The Brāhmaṇas also joined the ranks of the Buddhists and in course of time the growth of numerous sects in Buddhism paved the way for its extinction.

Jñānśrīmitra and Ratnakīrti were the main targets of Udayana, who attacked them (in his own way) very sharply. Jñānaśrī was a matchless Buddhist logician and he received recognition from Naropānta. He has very ably criticised Vācaspati Miśra. His works are a veritable mine of information on various aspects of life and learning at Vikramaśīla. He [68] regards Śaṁkara (author of *Sthirasiddhi*), Bhāsarvajña (*Nyayabhūṣana*), Trilochana (*Nyaymañjarī*) and Vacaspati Mishra as

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67 *Cf.* *Ātmatattvaviveka* (Choukhamba edition) p., 431.

—The Buddhist establishments drew within their fold eminent scholars of their time. Those scholars would have been valuable acquisitions to any institution of the time. Most of them were consulted, invited and sometimes taken to countries beyond the frontiers of India and that naturally evoked the jealousy of the Brāhmaṇa thinkers who used abusive languages against them.

68 *Cf.* A. L. Thakur's article in the Buddha Jayanti *Issue* of the *JBRS*, 1956,; *Cf. S. K. Bhuyan Commemoration Volume*, Cf. JBRS, XII. I shall take up the details in a subsequent paper of mine on the subject (author).

the four pillars of the edifice of *Varṇāśrama* culture and ably refutes them. It seems that Jñānaśrī had thoroughly mastered the Brāhmaṇical system of philosophy as we find him referring to and criticising Kumārila, Mahodadhi, Maṇḍana, Vācaspati and others. Their works (like Vṛhataṭīkā of Kumarila, *Vidhiviveka* of Maṇḍana and *Nyāyakaṇikā* of Vacaspati) have been quoted and criticised. A. L. Thakur is of opinion that Jñānaśrī influenced three branches of Indian logic, *viz*, Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist and Jaina. Jñānaśrī in his *Kṣaṇabhaṅgādhyāya* has ably expounded the Buddhist theory of transitoriness and has successfully refuted the arguments advanced by Trilochana (preceptor of Vācaspati) and Śaṁkara. Udayanāchārya criticised the views of Jñānaśrī in his *Ātmatattvaviveka*. Udayana and Gangeśa also wrote with the object of controverting Buddhism. Udayana criticises Jñānaśrī and Gangeśa quotes a verse of Jñānaśrī in his *Tattvachintāmaṇi*, Śaṁkara Misra of Mithilā (C. 15th century A. D.) describes Jñānaśrī as an authority on Buddhist philosophy and also quotes from him. He was an authority on Buddhist logic and his influence on his successor in the field of Logic is immense and immeasurable. Gangeśa shifted emphasis from *Padārthavivechana* (Oxtology) to Pramāṇavivechana (epistemology) and the four *pramāṇas* suggested by him are *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Upamāna* and *Śabda*. He is the father of *Navya-Nyāya* - a system, that arose out of centuries of philosophical disputations, that gave birth to a new school altogether.

VI

The most distinguished among the leading luminaries of the university of Vikramaśīla was Atiśa Dipaṁkara Śrījñāna, a widely travelled man and possessing encyclopaedic knowledge. He made the university internationally famous. At the time when the Tibetans had come to invite Atiśa to Tibet, there were fifty seven Paṇḍitas of great intellectual eminence and they were like the stars of heaven. According to Roerich[69], Atiśa's teachers in the university included Dharmarakṣīta, Jñānaśrīmitra (from whom Atiśa sought his advice on esoteric matters), a disciple of Dharmapāla of Suvarṇadvīpa and who received special recognition from Naropānta, Younger Kuśali, Jetāri, Keṛṣṇapāda also known as Bālāchārya, Dānaśrī, Prajñābhadra, Bodhibhadra and Ratnākaraśānti (master of many doctrines handed down through numerous lineages). Other

69 *Blue Annals*, V. 241 ff.

70 Bapat (edited), *Twenty five Hundred years of Buddhism*.

luminaries of the time included Ratnakīrti, Vairochana, Kanakaśrī of Nepal, Naropānta and Vidyākokil. Atiśa had received secret precepts from Āchārya Dharmakīrti. He placed foremost emphasis upon the mental creative efforts towards enlightenment. It would not be out of place here to dilate, in short details, upon the career and achievements of Atiśa.[71]

Atiśa was born at Sahor in A. D. 982[72] and his father's name was Kalyānaśrī. His parents were intimately connected with the University of Vikramaśīla. He is known in Tibet as *Dpal-Mar-Mad-Mdsa-Yes-Sy* and is also called *Jor-Vor-Je-Pal-Don-Atiśa.*[73] His original name was Chandragarbha. He was placed under Jetāri for education and training. At the age of nineteen he took the sacred vow from Śīlarakṣita, the Mahāsānghika Āchārya of the monastery of Odantpuri, who gave him the name of Śrī Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna. He also studied at Nālandā. He acquired proficiency in the three *Piṭakas* of the Mahāyāna School, the high metaphysics of the Mādhyamika Yogāchāra School, and four classes of the *Tantras.* When he began the study of the Buddhist sciences in a Vihāra, he was given the name of *Guhyajñānavajra* and was then initiated into the mysteries of esoteric Buddhism. It is believed that he was initiated into the mysteries of Buddhism and the lands of the Sramanas by Bodhibhadra, the principal Āchārya of Nālandā.[74] Tripathi believes that the title of Śrījñāna Dīpaṁkara was conferred upon Atiśa by Bodhibhadra of Nālandā. Bodhibhadra's teacher, Maitrigupta, was at that time residing at Rājagriha where Atiśa, along with his *Guru,* is believed to have gone to pay their respects. We have already referred to this point earlier in another connection. Atiśa read with him various aspects of Buddhism. Maitrigupta has also been described as Maitripā, Abdhutipā, Advayavajra, etc. and it is not possible, in the present state of our knowledge, to either accept or reject the above identification. The discovery of a manuscript biography of Advayaraja by Rāhulaji also does not solve the problems for good. Atiśa read Mantrayāna Vajrayāna with Naropānta.

71 Alaka Chattopadhyaya—*Op. Cit.* For details.

72 Rāhualji identifies Sahor with Sabour (Bhagalpur) but the identification is not accepted by Alaka Chattopadhyaya; *Cf. Twenty five Hundred years of Buddhism.*

73 There is a brilliant description of Atisa's activities in Sumpa's account.

74 Tripathi—*Baudhadharma aur Bihar*—P. 223. All his conclusions and findings are not open and above board and deserve to be read with caution.

He thoroughly studied the meditative sciences of the Buddhists and was initiated into the mysteries of esoteric Buddhism. When he was only fifteen, he had defeated a non-Buddhist logician in an intellectual disputation. He had finished the whole of *Nyāya-vindu* at the age of fifteen and had acquired complete mastery over all the Buddhist and non-Buddhist sciences at the age of twenty one. He defeated the *Tirthikas* on more than one occasion. By the time he was twenty nine, he had acquired full mastery of all the branches of general science, like grammar, logic, fine arts, theuraputics, etc. He read at the feet of Rāhulagupta and Śīlarakṣita who ordained him as a *Bhikṣu*, Dharmarakṣita, Sāntipā, Naropā, Kusalipā, Abdhutipā, Dombipā, etc. For twelve years, he practised both Mahāyāna and Hinayāna. Rāhulagupta initiated him into the *Vajra-ḍākinī-tantra*. He learnt *tantra* both in its scriptural literature and esoteric rituals. He received further instructions in *tantra* from Abdhutipā. He practised *Vratas* and learnt the songs of Ḍākini. After his initiation into Buddhism, he studied the Mahāyāna texts in details and learnt *Mahābibhāṣā* at the monastery of Odantpuri under Dharmarakṣita. From Vidyā-kokila, Budhibhadra, Abdhutipā, Prajñābhadra, and others, he received instructions in the difficult doctrines of Nāgārjuna and under Śāntipā and Dharmarakṣita, he learnt the teachings of *Viśiṣṭamārgakrama*. He further received the wisdom internal realisation from Abdhutipā, of Yoga from Dombipā and of philosophical profoundities from Naropā. Jetari, Ratnakīrti, Bālāchārya, Mahāmānava were his teachers in other branches of knowledge. He was extremely careful in observing all the rules of daily life including minor details of conduct.

After completing his education here, he proceeded to Suvarṇadwīpa, headquarters of Buddhism in the east. He stayed there for full twelve years and remained engrossed in the study of Buddhism and allied sciences. There he read with Dharmapāla or Dharmakīrti. Dīpaṁkara had always the message of moral purity and selfless sacrifice for others, of the virtuous life, and of the adherance to the pure Mahāyāna teaching. He returned to India via Ceylon. He made a great name at Suvarṇadwīpa. He had the vision of Tārā, Avalokiteśwara, Trisaṁvaravyūha and Hevajra. He served Buddhism by all the four Śaktis, *Viz*, *Yogaśakti*, *Kulaśakti*, *Aiśvaryaśakti* and *Vidyāśakti*. Among his famous Indian students of Buddhism were Piṭopā, Madhyasiṁha, Dharmākaramati, Bhūgarbha, Mitragupta and others. It should be noted that though born in a royal family Atiśa renounced the world and became a *Bhikṣu*, acquired all the wisdom which he employed to the cause of living beings. He made a pilgrimage to Vajrāsana (Bodh-Gaya).

He was invited to join the university of Vikramaśīla in the reign of Mahipāla or Nayapāla (who is believed to have been his disciple) as the principal Āchārya. According to another account, he was appointed the high priest of Vikramaśīla by Nayapāla. Under Atiśa's care, the monastery greatly prospered. Large accommodations for the *Bhikṣus* were made and new subjects of study were introduced and he started new system of teaching. He spent most of his time as 'elder' of the monastic college of the university.[75] He adopted for the Bhikṣus new method of teaching. Sumpa says—"When Bheyapāla reigned for thirty two years, the six gatekeepers had passed away. After that Dīpaṁkara Śrījñāna was *Upādhyāya* of Vikramaśīla. He also nourished Odantpuri". He was a Mahāsthavira, a fact which is disputed by some *or* a kind of academic head who enjoyed immense prestige. According to Sumpa, he was a Director of monks in a monastery. He possessed extraordinary intellect. He is believed to have expelled Maitrigupta, a Tāntrika, for taking wine. Maitrigupta was charged with presenting wine to a Buddhist Yogini whom he intended to consult on certain matters. The *Saṁgha* wanted to expel him and there arose a great controversy and difference of opinion among the members and majority of them were in favour of his expulsion. The expulsion was sought, on the ground of his violation of the codes of monastic conduct. Atiśa, opposed to gross tāntric eroticism and excesses, was responsible for the maintenance of monastic discipline and it was in that capacity that he expelled Maitrigupta, whose four notable students were Naṭekara, Diwākarachandra, Rānapāla and Vajrapāṇi. During Atiśa's stay at Vikramaśīla, it was the custom with the Buddhist monks to keep in charge the keys of Vihāras and temples. Atiśa had in his charge eighteen keys. He had also founded a class in the monastery consisting of twenty monks. Atiśa's fame encompassed all quarters of the world. He has been described as a second *Sarvajña*

He revived the practice of pure Mahāyāna doctrine by showing the right way to the ignorant and misguided Lāmās of Tibet. He took active part in the contemporary political life of north-eastern India and meditated between the Pālas and the Kalachuris who were struggling for supremacy in Bihar. It was at the initiative of Atiśa that a treaty between the two[76] was arranged and signed and further a matrimonial alliance was also established. On his way to Tibet, Atiśa wrote a letter to Nayapāla,

75 *Blue Annals*, i. 224.

76 *Cf. A Short note on Kapalasandhi* by R. K. Choudhary in the *Journal of Oriental Institute*, Baroda, 1956-57.

which is yet preserved and is known as '*Vimalaratnalekha*', the text of which has now been published by Alaka Chattopadhyaya.[77]

His fame as a Buddhist scholar spread far and wide and he was invited by the Tibetan ruler for purifying Buddhism. It was Śāntirakṣita, also known as Āchārya Bodhisattva in Tibet, from Nālandā who had laid the foundation of Buddhism in Tibet in the seventh century A. D. It was he who for the first time introduced Buddhist monasticism in Tibet which later came to be known as Lamaism. His student, Kamalaśīla, was later invited to Tibet and he defeated a Chinese saint in religious disputation. He was ultimately appointed the head of the metaphysical branch of the Buddhist church. Padmasaṁbhava was responsible for the growth of Tāntricism in Tibetan Buddhist liturgy. Śāntirakṣita's [78] philosophy formed the basis of theoritical outlook of Buddhists in Tibet. By the middle of eleventh century A. D., Buddhism in Tibet had degenerated into worst form and it was therefore thought proper to invite Atiśa to reform it. At that time, Atiśa was at the peak of his intellectual glory. Though still clinging to Yoga and Tāntricism, Atiśa believed in pure Mahāyāna and he was in favour of enforcing celibacy and high morality by deprecating the general practice of diabolical art. Many missions had come to take Atiśa to Tibet but all of them had failed. Vīryasiṁha had come with sufficient gold but Atiśa refused gold and did not go. Jayaśīla (Nag-Tsho) was then commissioned to bring Atiśa to Tibet. He was, then, studying at Vikramaśīla. On his way to Vikramaśīla, he was robbed and that shows the spirit of insecurity then prevailing in this part of the state. He was thrilled to have the first distant glimpse of the university. When Jayaśīla met Vīryasiṁha at Vikramaśīla, he was told that there were many eminent *Paṇḍitas* under Atiśa.

According to Alaka Chattopadhyaya who has studied afresh all the relevant Tibetan sources with regard to Atiśa, the authorities of Vikramaśīla were not willing to allow Atiśa to go to Tibet. Atiśa had told Nag-Tsho to keep the matter of his mission a secret. This shows that Atiśa was not very much satisfied with the conditions, then obtaining in the campus, and he was also in a mood to leave it and go to Tibet. He tried, with the connivance of Nag-Tsho, to keep the matter a top secret but the news broke out. Having learnt the news Śilākara said—"...You are stealing away our Paṇḍita." Atiśa was advised to go to Tibet for three years only and Jayaśīla agreed to this proposal. Jayaśīla was to bring Atiśa back to

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77 *Op. Cit.* Appendix.

78 A. K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 476 ff.

the University. It appears that this part of the condition was not fulfilled by the Tibetans. Everybody at the university was surprised at the behaviour of Jayaśīla. Sthavira Ratnākara, the most influential and possibly the Cheif of Atiśa, pointing to Nagtsho, said[79]—"This Āyuṣmata has not really come here for the sake of study. The king of Tibet has sent him to steal away my man. On former occasion, he sent an invitation to him but I did not let Atiśa go. This time I can not.....Atiśa, out of his own goodwill and purity of heart, likes to secretly visit Tibet..if I do not let him go, it would be putting obstructions in his way in doing good to others. Out of compassion for you and your countrymen, many of whom have died for taking Atiśa to Tibet, I lead his services to your country for three years and after that you must bring him back here...You should also accompany hi n otherwise it would be a breach of promise..." Atiśa, as the high priest, handed over charge to Sthavira Ratnākara and left for Tibet[80].

It was at the end of a religious assembly that in course of a conversation, Naropānta said—'Prabhu Dīpaṁkara, now you should be the minister of religion of Buddha. So saying, he made over to him the university and the Dharma. During the twenty days, he stayed at Vikramaśīla, Naropā did not enter into any religious discussion with Atiśa. Thereafter Naropā proceeded towards the south and died there. Some relics of his remains were brought to Tibet by Atiśa. Jayaśīla had to wait completely for three years at Vikramaśīla before he could succeed in persuading Dīpaṁkara to go to Tibet. Both Śilākara and Ratnākara held superior administrative posts than Atiśa. Atisā, it appears, was more of academic head than administrative. He was the High-Priest and enjoyed his enviable status on account of his learning, unbounded knowledge and his ability to expound the intricacies of Buddhism with all its branches and ramifications. The true nature of the assignment of Atiśa at Vikramaśīla is yet to be properly assessed as there is a difference of opinion among the scho-

79 A. Chattopadhyaya, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 126-142.

80 *Ibid.*; Also *Cf.* S. C. Das, *Life of Atiśa*.

It appears that the conditions in the university were not very favourable for the proper development of intellectual atmosphere otherwise there is no reason why Atiśa should try to leave the campus and go to Tibet. He held a very prominent place in the academic life of the university and was one of its gems, respected by the ruler—(to be more acurate—a preceptor of Nayapāla) but even then he wanted to go to Tibet. He knew that the news would not be welcomed in the campus and hence he wanted to maintain secrecy. His mission to Tibet was philanthrophic,

larson this count. He was, of course, the intellectual light of Vikramaśīla as would be evident from the following expressions of Ratnākara—"Without Atiśa, India will be in darkness. He holds the keys of many institutions. In his absence many monasteries will be empty. The looming signs prognosticate evil for India and I am much concerned at heart". Shortly before his departure for Tibet, the leadership of the Buddhist order was conferred upon Dīpaṁkara. It was in the central Hall of the University and in the assembly of all the Bhikṣus that Naropā made the following declaration — "From this day on, the responsibility of the Buddhist order and faith will rest on you". It was on account of pre-eminent intellectual position, that nobody at the monastery was happy at the news of his departure. It is one of the reasons why the issue was kept a secret for a pretty long time. He has been described as a steward of the monastic college. In some sources, he is described as a *Mahāsthavira*[81]. At the time of his departure, Buddhism was at its lowest ebb[82]. According to Jayaśīla, there were fifty three monks at Odantapur and about a hundred monks at Vikramaśīla. Both Odantpur and Vikramaśīla were falling into decay[83]. S. C. Das says-"The great Buddhist sage, Dharmapāla of Prāchya, (modern Darbhanga or Bihar), while sojourning in Nepal, on pilgrimage, was invited by King Yes-es-od of Tibet. Dharmapāla was the tutor of the king and he ordained three Indians[84]. This Dharmapāla has been identified by some scholars with Atiśa[85] but that is not a fact. A study of the contemporary sources reveal to us that he was different from Dipaṁkara and was his predecessor in Tibet.

Atiśa was, in one way or the other, connected with almost all the Vihāras of his time. After his return from Suvarṇadwīpa and before proceeding to Tibet, he had contacts with the monasteries of Somapura (Bangladesa), Vajrāsana (Bodha-Gaya), Odantpur, Nālandā and Vikramaśīla [85*]. He defeated the *Tirthika* heretics at Gaya and maintained the superiority of Buddhism over all other religions of Magadha. He was also honoured by the Kalachuris. Before going to Tibet, he made a pilgrimage to Bodh-

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81 *Blue Annals*, V, 246.

82 P. V. Bapat (edited), 2500 *years of Buddhism*, Rāhula's article.

83 *BA*, i, 243 note.

84 *JASB*, 1881, p. 236; *Sum-Pa*, XVII-XVIII.

85 Mazumdar, Raychoudhary & Datta, *Advanced History of India.*, p. 168.

85* Atiśa lived at Somapur under his spiritual preceptor Ratnakārasānti who was the Sthavira of the Vihāra and translated here the *Mādhyamakararatna pradīpa* of Bhāvya into Tibetan in collaboration with Vīryasiṁha & Nag-Tsho. Vairochanarakṣita also received instructions from Saraṇa of Somapur Vihāra.

Gaya and other holy places. About three dozens of scholars accompanied him to Tibet and the list included Kṣitigarbha or Bhūmigarbha, Bhūmisaṁgha, Vīryachandra. and Paṇḍita Parahitabhadra. Kṣitigarbha was one of his five disciples and elder brother of Vajrapāṇi, the renowned preacher of the *Mahāmudrātantra* in Nepal and Tibet. Vīryachandra is described as the brother of Atiśa. From Gaya, Atiśa proceeded to Swayambhunātha Chaitya in Nepal, and travelled by the old route connecting Nepal via Patna and Champaran. After proceeding to Palpa, Atiśa is said to have met a Nepalese king named Anantakirti, whose historicity is yet a doubtful proposition. Vīryasiṁha died. Here from Nepal, Atiśa wrote a letter to his disciple king, Nayapāla, which is known as *Vimalaratnalekha*, already referred to earlier. Here he also composed his *Charyā-saṁgrahapradīpa*. Anantakirti is said to have requested Atiśa to found a monastery in Nepal. His son, Padmaprabhā, was ordained as a monk and he became a disciple of Atiśa.

He was brought to Tibet to bring about a renaissance in Buddhism. He was received in Tibet in right royal fashion and was exclaimed as the greatest Paṇḍita from India. All the thirty five scholars accompanying him to Tibet belonged to the University of Vikramaśīla. He established Buddhism in its original purity. We have seen above that Śāntirakṣita was responsible for the definitive establishment of Buddhism in Tibet and his philosophy formed the basis of the critical outlook of Buddhists in Tibet. One of his pupils, Haribhadra or Siṁhabhadra, is regarded in Tibet as the principal source for the interpretation of Maitreya's *Abhisamayālaṁkāra*. He is also connected with the university of Vikramaśīla. Atiśa revised the practice of Mahāyāna doctrine, cleared Tibetan Buddhism of foreign and heretical elements and started a movement which may be called Lamaist reformation. He set in motion the wheel of Law in Tibet and his arrival forms a landmark in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.[86] The true rebirth of Buddhism took place there in the second half of the eleventh century A. D. and the reformed sect, known as *Kadam-pa*, later became the established church of Tibet under the name of (*Ge-lug-Pa*) (*Gelukapa*). Those connected with the teachings of Padmasaṁbhava became known as *Nyingma-pa* (or the ancients). Atiśa's movement was responsible for the rise of two semi-reformed sects, *Viz. Kagūpa* or *Kar-gu-pa*

86 G. Tucci—*Tibet, the land of snows*—PP. 29-30.
For Mahāyāna Buddhism, *Cf.* also from "The *Surangama-Samādhi-Śūtra*" translated and edited by Washul Tulku and Bhikshu Pāsādika (Chief Editor S. V. Sohoni). It is a very important work on Mahāyānism.

and *Sakyapa* or *Sasakyapa*. Tilopā's disciple Maripā is credited with having founded the *Kar-gyu-pa* sect in Tibet. The *Sasakyapa* stood between *Kadampa* and *Kargupa*. Kublai Khan patronised the *Sasakyapa*. It was further divided into *Norpa* and *Jonangpa*. Tāranātha belonged to the *Jonangpa* sect. It was in the 15th century A. D. that Lama Tson-K'a-pa reorganised Atiśa's reformed sects and altered its name as Ge-Lug-Pa (the virtuous order). This eclipsed the other sect and obtained the priest Kingship of Tibet. The head of the Lamaistic Church, the Grand Lama, was confirmed in his soveregnty in A. D. 1650, by the Chinese Emperor and he was given the Mongol title of Dalai (the Ocean). Lamaism reveals that it is a tree with many branches having its root in Tāntric Mahāyāna Buddhism as developed at the University of Vikramaśīla and later taken to Tibet by Atiśa. He has been rightly described as the greatest reformer of Lamaism. In Tibet, he is held to be an incarnation of *Mañjūśrī*. His Chief disciple in Tibet was Domton (Brom-ston), the first heirarch of the new reformed sect of *Kadampa*. Lamaism was formally rooted in Tibet and by the end of the eleventh century A. D., the Lamas possessed a fairly full and scholarly documented and translated bulky Mahāyāna canons along with their commentaries.

An inscription contains the names of two important Lāmās, *Viz*-Rin-Chen-bsing-lo and Atiśa. According to the inscription, Rinchen was made a light of wisdom through the agency of Atiśa. This is a reference to the controversies between the two Lāmās which ended in former's acknowledging the supremacy of Atiśa[87]. In his *Bodhīpathapradīpa*, he has expounded the stages of the path of three classes of men. The Tibetans are grateful to him because of the purity of doctrines which he preached. E. H. Walsh observes—"with reference to Atiśa, it is interesting to note that his tomb still exists at Nyethang in Tibet, and the paintings on it and on the walls of the Chapel which adjoin it, are the most artistic that I saw while in Tibet". Atiśa's close associate Vīryasiṁha was the earliest of Indian translators into Tibetan and he worked diretly under Atiśa for a number of years and Atiśa took him as his interpretor but he died on the way. He translated into Tibetan, (i) *Śrīcakrasaṁvarastotra sarvārthasiddhi Viśuddhachuḍāmaṇī* by Siddhāchārya Dwārikapā and (ii) *Dohākoṣapañjikānām*. Jayaśīla also acted as translator of Sanskrit texts into Tibetan.

87 *ASR*, 1909-10—'On one of the walls of the Tabo monastery in Spiti, I discovered an inscription of the days of king Byang Charbod of Guje, the very ruler, who had invited Atiśa to Tibet. The principal Hall of the Tabo monastery, called *Nam-Pur-Snarg-mzdad*, seems to have remained unchanged'' (Vide *Historical Documents from the Borders of Tibet*).

After Atiśa, a Kayastha Gayādhara, said to be a disciple of Maitripā, went to Tibet and translated a number of Buddhist texts. Atiśa died at the age of seventy three. His message may be summed up in the following words—(his own, of course)—

(i) "Love the enemy and friends equally...

(ii) "Do not examine the faults of others..Examine those of your own...

(iii) "Respect others and serve them—

(iv) Be straight and steady—

(v) "Control your-self first..."

Over and above his works in connections with the dissemination of Buddhism, he is credited with having written, compiled, translated over two hundred books on Buddhist religion, philosophy and tantras. The colophons of the Tibetan *MSS* refer to a number of works attributed to Atiśa, either written or translated by him. The Peking edition of the *MSS* *Kāya-Vāc-Citta-Suprastisṭhita-nāma* has "written by Dipaṁkara Śrījñāna"-translated and revised by Dipaṁkara Śrijñāna and Vīryasiṁha at Vikramaśila. He is credited with the authorship of *Māyamika-Upadeśa*, (written by Dipaṁkara at Vikramaśīla at the request of Jayaśīla) *Ratnakarmadoḍghaṭanāma*, *Śūtrasamucayasaṁcayatha* (written by Dipaṁkara at Vikramaśila) and translated by Dīpaṁkara and Viryasiṁha)—being the essence of his lectures delivered at the request of his students at the monastery on the eve of his departure for Tibet-; under Dipaṁkara at Vikramaśīla, Vīryasiṁha translated *Saṁsāra-mano-nirṇayaṁkāranāmasaṁgīti* and Jayaśīla translated *Ārya-tārā-devī-stotra Muktikāmālānāma* by Chandragomin and also another work known as *Triratnastotra*. Atiśa is further credited with having translated *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-vimśati-āloka* and the great commentary of *aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* into Tibetan, and with having composed *Guhyasamāja abhisamaya*, transalated *Mādhyamikāsaṁgrahabhāṣya* and also a commentary on *Mahāyānottaratantra* of Asaṅga. Besides these his works in the Tanjyur collections are as follows :—

(i) *Bodhipathapradīpa*

(ii) *Charyāsaṁgrahapradīpa*

(iii) *Satyadwayāvtāra* or *Satyavyavahāra*

(iv) *Madhyamopadeśa*

(v) *Saṁgrahagarbha*

(vi) *Hṛidayanischita*

(vii) *Bodhisattvamārgāvalī*

(viii) *Bodhisattvakarmādimārgāvatāra*

(ix) *Śaraṇāgatadeśa*

(x) *Mahāyānapathasādhanavarnasaṁgraha*

(xi) *Mahāyānapathasādhanasaṁgraha*

(xii) *Śūtrārthasammuchayopadeśa*

(xiii) *Daśakuśalakarmopadeśa*

(xiv) *Karmabibhaṅga*

(xv) *Samādhisaṁvaraparivarta*

(xvi) *Lokottarasaptakavidhi*

(xvii) *Gurukriyākarma*

(xviii) *Chittopadeśasaṁvaravidhikarma*

(xix) *Śikṣāsamuchchaya-abhisamaya*
(Said to be a work of Dharmapāla of Suvarṇadwīpa).

(xx) *Vimalaratnalekha.*

A short note on the last abbot of Vikramaśīla, Śākyaśrībhadra, would not be out of place[88] here. He was the last to visit Tibet from Vikramāsīla. He was born at Pravarpur (Kashmir) in A. D. 1127. Practically nothing definite is known about his early life and career except that he read at the feet of eminent teachers like Śukhaśrī, Raviśrījñāna, Vinayaśrī, Abhayakīrti, Chandragupta, Viktyatadeva, Rabigupta and others. He accepted Sarvāstivāda[89] in 1149 A. D. He visited Bodh-Gayā, Nālandā and Vikramaśīla. While on way to Magadha, he had varied experiences on the way. He reached Vikramaśīla and was received there with great pomp and splendour. In an intellectual disputation, he defeated a *Tīrthaṁkara*. He also visited the monastery of Odantpur where there were about twelve thousand monks at that time. He is also believed to have visited the Khasarpanivihāra, the exact location of which is yet to be ascertained but is believed to be somewhere in Bihar. While he was staying in Kankarprabhadhwaja Kalyāna Vihāra, identified with Kañchaṇadhwaja of Vikramaśīla by Rahulji[90], he was invited by the ruler of China. He was on very good terms with the Pāla rulers of Magadha[91] whose authority was now limited to a portion of Bihar (especially eastern Bihar). He once stayed with Pāla ruler, possibly Palapāla of Jayanagar, a place near Lakhisarai in the district of Monghyr, and possibly the capital of the decadent Pālas. Various images and broken Pāla inscriptions have been noticed in the area. He is said to have been the *Guru* of the Magadhan King.

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88 For details, see R. Jha, *op. cit.*

89 R. Sankritayana, *Bauddha Saṁskriti*, pp. 410ff; *BA*, 1064.

90 *Purātattvanibandhāvalī* p. 222; R. Jha has given a detailed account of Śākyaśri's life on the basis of a Tibetan source.

91 *Cf. JBRS*, Vol. 54, p. 196.

At that time, the Turuṣkas were making frequent depredations and dents into the so called fortified regions of the rulers of Magadha in the eastern part of Bihar. Śākyaśrī was in Bihar at that time when uncertainty was looming large in the political sky. It is said that he was told in dream to move towards the east. When he was staying in Yoganavihāra (identification not possible), he was advised to go to the north and he decided to go to Tibet. Lochava had come from Tibet to invite him. He was already there to conduct him to Tibet. The resident monks of Jagaddallavihāra requested him not to go to Tibet but he did not agree and proceeded to Tibet. Vibhūtichandra of Jagaddallavihāra was one of his pupils and he was also associated with Vikramaśīla. He has paid tributes to Śākyaśrī in glowing terms.[92] Vibhūtichandra and Dānaśīla also accompanied him to Tibet and settled there. Rahulji is of opinion that after the destruction of the monasteries of Odantpuri, Nālandā and Vikramaśīla, a large number of monks under the leadership of Śākyaśrī went to Tibet and settled there. Maithila writer Vinayaśrī was also one such settler.[93] Śākyaśrī was a renowned scholar and philosopher and some of his eminent contemporaries were Buddhaśrī, Ratnarakṣita, Jñānākaragupta,

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92 JBORS—XXIII. 1. pp. 11-12—
परमाराध्यतमेषं विश्वजनाध्यतमेषु सकल......गुरुषु
सकलजनालोके (?)
स्थितगुरुषुजगदर्थाशक्तिचितंषु सर्व्वासंगरहितेषु
धर्मराज्याभिषिक्तेषु ।
सर्वैश्वर्यविमुखेषु अनर्घरत्न त्रयगुरुषु त्रिरत्नगुरुषु
सर्वेपारमितान्त्वयगुरुषु सुचिराराधितगुरुषु
सम्भारद्वयसम्भरणपरेषु विश्वनैः स्वाभाव्यदर्शिषु
करुणामहादेवीपरिरम्भमुदितेषु तृष्णात्यन्तविरतेषुं ।
प्रज्ञायवृत्तिषुत्रिजगदनायतेषु ।
कश्मीरपैण्डपातिक सत्पण्डितचक्रपुण्डरीकेष्
श्रीमद्गुरुचरणेषु हि **विभूतिचन्द्रस्य सप्रेम**......

93 भोटङ्गत्वा ततः स्थित्वा श्रुत्वासर्वम······नं
पश्चान्नेपालतः स्थित्वा पत्रोयं प्रहितामया ।।
तदीयं वरर्णनं कान्यं पण्डितेनु विभूतिना ।
आत्मशास्तारमावास्थें (?) संघं वोधयितुंकृतम् ।
नोमघपोहं न विकाल भोजीमांसन्त मां स भजते कदाचित् ।
तीव्रवर्तमैव श्रुतं कथ (?) चित्तलोकपालामुनयः प्रमाण ।
—These Buddhist scholars throw light on the then conditions of Tibet in their writings.
Cf. Dohākoṣa, p. 19; *Tibet me Baudhadharma*, p. 30 and *BA*, 1051.

Vinayaśrī and others. Rāhulaśrībhadra, the last abbot of the university of Nālandā and a teacher of Dharmaswāmī (1234-36), was one of the renowned disciples of Śākyaśrī. Rāhulabhadra was one of the greatest authorities of his time on *Śabdavidyā*. Vinayaśrī, Vibhūtichandra, Dānaśīla, Sugatiśrī and many others busied themselves in translating Buddhist texts into Tibetan, besides composing songs in their own mother tongue. Śākyaśrī is attributed with the authorship of a number of books, the names of some of them are given below :—

(i) *Tathāgatanāmasaṁgatakalpita Bhadrālaṁkāramālānāma*
(ii) *Pañchagrahaprathaggaṇopadeśanāma*
(iii) *Vajrapadagarbhasaṁgrahanāma*
(iv) *Vajrapadagarbhasaṁgrahanāmapañjikā*
(v) *Āryatārāsādhana*
(vi) *Viśuddhadarśanacharyopadeśanāma*
(vii) *Nāmasaṁgītivachanopadeśa*
(viii) *Manjūśrīkālachakra*
(ix) *Saṁkṣiptamoghapāśasādhana*
(x) *Poṣadhakaraṇiya*
(xi) *Ārya-moghapāśapoṣadhavidyāṇaya*
(xii) *Āryakṛṣṇajāmbhalasādhana*
(xiii) *Mahāyānopadeśagāthā*
(xiv) *Saptāṅgasaddharmacharyāvatāra*

We learn from Dalai Lama's chronicles, that Śākya Paṇḍita of the Sakyapā sect of Tibet received rules of perfect investiture with the great Paṇḍita Śākyaśrībhadra, a profound scholar of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Buddhist logic. The *Sulekha* of Sākya Paṇḍita (originator of the Mongolian script) throws interesting sidelight on the cultural history of India, Tibet and China. The cultural contact between India and Tibet, established through the University of Vikramaśīla, continued through the ages and Indian tradition of scholastic learning was persued with all earnestness by the Tibetan Lāmās even when there was no Vikramaśīla to guide them. When Śākyaśrī reached Tibet in about A. D. 1204, a large number of persons over there became his disciples. With him and following him many scholars of Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism also reached Tibet. Śākyaśrī stayed there for about nine or ten years and he returned to Kashmir, where he died at the age of ninetynine (A. D. 1225-26). Rahulji says that his materials like *Chīvara* etc. alongwith his image are still preserved in a monastery in Tibet. He was highly respected in that country. There was regular and continuous intercourse

between Tibet and Vikramaśīla for about four centuries and there was a special guest-house for the Tibetans at Vikramaśīla.

Vikramaśīla maintained the highest tradition of scholarship throughout its existence. It was the main centre of education and culture in the east—specially of the *Mantrayāna* and *Vajrayāna* schools of thought. The portraits of Nāgārjuna (founder of Mahāyāna) and Atiśa (his true follower) were on the main gate of the university. It was fixed at the time when Atiśa was the academic head of the monastic university. It was out of the Mahāyāna, that *Tantrayāna* was born and tantricism of all specification and variety had taken roots here. If Tibetan tradition is to be relied upon, the Tantrics of Vikramaśīla put the Turks to flight many times by their magic spells and charms. When the actual assault came, all their charms and spells were of no avail and the so called Tantrics and magicians took to their heels. The university by the end of the twelfth century A. D. had degenerated into a centre of the worst form of esoteric practices and the old purity and sanctity of the monasteries had been a thing of the past.

Administration

The administration of the university was vested in a council of six *Dwārapaṇḍitas* presided over by the chief abbot and the last abbot to have presided over the destiny of the university was Śākyaśrī himself. The university was the abode of scholars, who flocked here from different parts of the country, for acquisition of higher knowledge. Those who distinguished themselves in any branch of learning or scholarship were decorated with the title of Paṇḍita or Mahāpaṇḍita by the reigning monarch. We have already referred to above the names of some such eminent Paṇḍitas. It was the highest title. It is said that the system of teaching at Vikramaśīla was better than at all other contemporary institutions. In the twelfth century A. D. there were about three thousand monks in the university. There was a well-provided inn in the university where guests stayed.

Library

The university had a rich and extensive manuscript library which excited the admiration of even the Turkish invadors. With its own manuscripts the university of Vikramaśīla, in course of time, acquired rich collection of books and it contained many rare works on Tantra, Grammar, Metaphysics and Logic for the teaching of which the university

became renowned. The Academic Council of the university was incharge of the library. Library did not mean simply collecting and storing books but also it made arrangements for copying number of books for scholars. Old, damaged and worn out manuscripts were replaced by preparing new copies. The foreign scholars were also supplied with the copies of rare books. Necessary financial aids were given by the rulers for meeting the cost of maintenance of the library. The Tibetan translation of works prepared at Vikramaśīla and their preservation in Tanjur and Kanjur is an evidence of the fact that large bulks were produced at this university. In the preparation of new or extra copies the services of resident monk teachers were pressed into service. Students and clerks were also asked to help in preparing the manuscripts for the library.[93*]

VII

Dharmaswāmī, the Tibetan traveller, who visited India between A.D. 1234 and 1236 does not mention Vikramaśīla when he speaks of other Buddhist centres like Nālandā and Bodh-Gaya. He stayed at Nālandā for two years. His uncle had seen Vikramaśīla in existence but Junior Dharmaswāmī's non-mention of it clearly indicates that the institution had gone out of existence sometime between A. D. 1199 and 1203. Dharmaswāmī had witnessed the Turkish raids on Odantpuri. Vikramaśīla was completely destroyed and according to Dharmaswāmī, its stones were thrown into the Ganges. It appears that Śākyaśrī, anticipating the impending Turkish invasion, fled and took shelter with the Pāla ruler at Jayanagar near Lakhisarai. The Turks were, then, in a triumphant mood. Tāranātha says..."The Turuṣka king...destroyed Vikramaśīla and on the site of the old Vihāra a fortress of Turuṣka was erected..". The Senas faild to protect the destruction of these monasteries. Tāranātha says—"Worshippers of Iśvara, (probably the Senas) did not oppose the Turks whilst the latter plotted with several minor feudal rulers to extend their hegemony over the east". Raids were organised against the universities. It has rightly been asserted that "with these universities a great segment of the cultural heritage of India, secular as well as Buddhist, perished for ever".[94]

93* *Cf.* (i) R. L. Mitra. *Nepalese Buddhist Literature*, p. 229.
(ii) B C. Law *Early Indian Monasteries*, p. 9.
(iii) *A complete list of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons* (Tohuku Imperial University, Sendai). (Japan—1934).
(iv) D. K. Barua's article on *Library in Ancient India* (Modern Period—1963. pp. 283ff).

94 A. K. Warder, *Op. Cit.* p. 508; *Cf. JBORS*, XXIII. Pt. I, p. 18.

The *Sambhala-Lam-Yig* contains an account of the destructions of the Buddhist monasteries in Bihar. The text mentions Sena kings of Bengal and it has some similarity with Tāranātha, on which, I suppose the historical portion is based. Even when Śākyaśrī was here, he found Odantpuri and Vikramaśīla in a most helpless state of affairs.[95] The rulers had fortified Vikramaśīla, for safety but all to no purpose.[96] We further learn from Tāranātha that the Turks in alliance with the local[97] people destroyed Vikramaśīla. The *Sambhala-Lam-Yig*[98] deals with the Muslim invasion of Magadha and Vikramaśīla—an international centre of Vajrayāna. Bakhtiyar Khalji, after reducing the Odantpuri monastery, proceeded towards Kiul and Lakhisarai and possibly defeated Palapāla *or* reduced his authority to non-entity. On his way to Bengal, he destroyed Vikramaśīla. The scholars left the university and most of them went to Tibet where they wielded great power and authority and busied themselves in translating Sanskrit texts into Tibetan.

The Turks were, then, in a spirit of exuberance and triumph and it was not only the religious zeal that led them to destroy these Vihāras but a certain delight in the plunder might have swelled the army of Bakhtiyar Khalji. Those important monasteries were great centres of wealth and riches. Donations, in various form and shapes, through the centuries by the rulers and the devotees had made these Vihāras centres of power, pelf, wealth and corruption. The triumphant Turkish soldiers were concerned more with gold and the accumulated wealth of the monasteries than with the actual destruction. In course of invasion, loot and arson were inevitable. According to Bloch, Bakhtiyar did not go to Bodh-Gaya for the simple reason that a *Pipala* tree was certainly no object worth looting. The object which led them to play havoc with these monasteries and important centres of learning was mainly economic and not totally religious. We have seen above that both Tāranātha and

95 *JASB*, 1898, p. 25.
96 *IHQ*, XXVII, p. 240.
97 *Ibid.*, pp. 241-6 for details.
98 *Op. Cit.*, (Hindi version), p. 55—

लवसेन के समय में तुर्कों ने युद्ध कर श्री बौद्धगया के बुद्ध मंदिर से भी सब धन ले गये तथा अनेक भिक्षुओं को उनलोगों ने मार डाला।

P. 50—लवमसेन ने मुर-तुरुक के राजा मुस्तफा खाँ के साथ युद्ध किया जिसने संपूर्ण मगध, उदन्तपुरी तथा विक्रमशिला को नष्ट कर दिया।

P. 47—**आपस के झगड़ों से इनकी शक्ति कम हो गई थी।**

Sumatiśrījñāna testify to the fact that the Turks had the support of the local population, including some feudal chiefs, in destroying these centres. The religious zealots and iconoclasts, common to all religious sects, might have perpetrated some atrocities in the name of religion. After destruction, the raiders could realise that these centres were *Vihāras* or monastic colleges.

The existence of inequality in society, prevalence of beggary and unemployment, luxurious living of a few, coupled with sexual excesses, rigidity of caste rules and the question of being polluted by the touch of one another, exclusive isolationism and lack of proper education and other factors combined together, contributed towards the decline of these centres of Buddhist education and culture in the long run. The regular conflict between the Mimāmśakas and the Buddhists also paved the success of the Muslims and destructions of the Buddhist monasteries. We have seen how Buddhists were treated by the Brāhmaṇas and a scholar of the eminence of Udayana called Dipaṁkara Śrījñāna a fool.[99] oppressed and otherwise untouchable Hindus joined the ranks of the Buddhists and also of the Turks and they were no less responsible for the decline of these monasteries. Many of the Buddhists and persons of lower orders joined the ranks of Turks whose religion had certain democratic elements. The Turkish invasion finally gave a shattering blow to the last vestige of Buddhism which disappeared from its soil of birth.

Monasteries came to be patronised by wealthy and undesirable persons. A seal of a feudal chief (rāṇaka), named rāṇaka Śrīdevasya has been discovered from the site of Antichak. The feudal chief might have been in charge of the fort at a time when its decline was imminent and the authorities of the Pālas had been reduced to non-entity. *Vaṭaparvatak* might have been one of the temporary capitals of the Pālas. The sizeable number of villages held by the priests, temples and monasteries show that feudalism had gripped the land and the weakening of the central authority enabled the feudal lords to rule the roost. Monasteries could not keep themselves aloof from the societies as they had to be heavily subsidised for their upkeep. It has been rightly pointed out by Dr. Deviprasad Chattopadhyaya that the continued patronage of merchants, feudal chiefs and monarchs were responsible for the decline of Buddhism in India. Unworthy persons entered the monastic order

99 *S. S. Bhuyan Commemoration—Volume*, Dr. A. L. Thakur's article.

for sexual indulgence, easy living, and minor benefits. Extreme rottenness overtook the monasteries which became centres of internal bickerings and undignified struggle for power. The royal support, after the fall of the Pālas, ended. Naturally their decline was a matter of course and there's nothing unusual about it. Tāranātha says—"there were a great number of books which came under the possession of the Musallamanas. They summoned a number of Hindus so that they might give them information respecting the purpose of these books....." According to Tāranātha, Vikramaśīla along with its fortress was destroyed on the spot and a fortress of the Turuṣka was erected. There appears to have been a regular fight between the guards of the fort of Vikramaśīla and the Turkish soldiers. The monks also fought for sometime for the protection of the monastery but all in vain. Tāranātha's account of the destruction has similarity with Minhaj's account. Minhaj had as his informants two of the holy warriors who had themselves participated in the venture. Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammadbin Bhakhtiyar Khalji was responsible for its destruction.[99*] According to Tāranātha *even some monks were acting as agents of the advancing Turks.* This suggests that some of the dissenting monks had made a common cause with invading Turks and had helped the invaders in achieving their ends. The Brahmanical reaction against Buddhism was already there and the people of Mithilā and Bengal under the influence of Brahmanical thought spearheaded such movements. The Tantrics of the University could realise only then that their charms, spells, sorceries and ritualistic practices were of no avail in the face of invading Turks. Śākyaśrī had to witness the gradual withering away of the tottering edifice of Buddhism. It has been rightly suggested by P. C. Ray that "the monasteries had degenerated into hotbed of corruption so much so that the Musalman conquerers felt little compunction in putting the inmates thereof to the sword." Buddhism, in its last phase, had lost its own vitality and *had become parasitical in nature.* Their parasitical character alienated them from the general mass and there was hardly any general support for a cause which was dependent more on public cooperation. The destruction of the Vihāras and other Buddhist monasteries in different parts of Magadha sounded the deathknell of Buddhism in India.

The history of the decline of the University of Vikramaśīla is a romantic saga as it was during that very period that a major portion of

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99* *Cf.* S. C. Sarkar, *Some Tibetan references to Muslim advance into Bihar & Bengal*, in PIHRC, 1942. pp. 138-52.

eastern India was gasping under the dead weight of political uncertainty. Quoting from the accouut of Dharmaswāmī, D. K. Barua [100] suggests that it was effaced by 1235. He has confused the matter. It has been said that it "was still existing in the time of elder Dharmaswāmī (1153—1216) and of the Kashmiri Paṇḍita Śākyaśrībhadra (1145—1225), but when Dharmaswāmī visited the country, there were no traces of it left..........the Turuṣka soldiers having razed it to the ground, had thrown the foundation stones into the Gaṅgā[101]." Śākyaśrībhadra was its last abbot and he fled in anticipation of the impending attack. Seeking shelter of the last Pāla ruler at Jayanagar, he consequently went to Tibet via Jagaddalla. All these took place between A. D. 1199 and 1203 and we find him in Tibet in A. D. 1204. Thus the university appears to have been destroyed sometime between A. D. 1199 and 1203, as can be inferred from a study of all the available sources [101*]. It was not in existence in 1235 A. D. as Barua would have us believe. Dharmaswāmī was studying at Nālandā which was effaced after 1236. There is no force in the argument either that the mahavihāra flourished till the end of 13th cent A. D. [102] The grand store of the costly manuscripts and well preserved books and painting was destroyed. J. N. Sammaddar has rightly pointed out—"If Nalanda fulfilled the dictum of Newman that a university is a place of learning implying the assemblage of strangers from various places in one spot, *the royal University of Vikramaśīla satisfied the dictum of Carlyle that a true university is a collection of books*".[103]

There can be no denying the fact that though Buddhism disappeared from India, the land of its birth, it gave birth to neo-Hinduism as would be evident from the following facts :—

(i) Śaivas borrowed the monastic and contemplative elements of the Mahāyāna Buddhism;

(ii) Vaiṣṇavas borrowed from Buddhism the devotional and humanitarian elements and *Sahajayāna* became closely associated with the Vaiṣṇavas of Bengal.

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100 D. K. Barua, *Viharas in Ancient India*, Calcutta—1969. p. 160.

101 Roerich, *Biography of Dharmaswamin*, p. 64.

101* A. B. M. Habilullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule, in India* p. 84.

102 JRAS Monograph. No. 24.

103 *Op. Cit.*, 116.

(iii) Vairāgis replaced philanthrophic Mahāyāna Śramaṇas.

(iv) Buddha was given a place in Hindu Pantheon and Jayadeva described him as the tenth incarnation of Viṣṇu.

(v) Mahāyāna was built on a wholesale borrowing from Hinduism.

(vi) The Vajrayāṇa elements of Buddha—bring him in close touch with Śiva and blending of the type of Śiva and Bodhisattva is perceptible in the art of Jāvā.

(vii) Influence of Śakti on Buddhism is the mystery of the idea of *Prajñāpāramitā* in the Vajrayāna School, leading ultimately to the development of the Tantras. It was some of the corrupt practices of the Tantras and the unhealthy development connected with it that contributed to the decline of Vikramaśila and other centres of Buddhism.

APPENDIX I

Tāranātha's account of Vikramaśīla

(based on Lāmā Chimpā & Alaka Chattopadhyaya edition).

I

Twelve Tantrika Teachers of Vikramaśīla (p. 18)–also *Cf.* pp. 325ff.

(i) Jñānapāda
(ii) Dipaṁkarabhadra
(iii) Laṅkājayabhadra (was the Tantra-ācārya of Vikramaśīla)
(iv) Śrīdhara (he was invited to Vikramaśīla)
(v) Bhavabhadra
(vi) Bhavyakīrti
(vii) Lilāvajra
(viii) Durjayachandra
(ix) Samayavajra (or Kṛṣṇasamayavajra)
(x) Tathāgatarakṣita
(xi) Bodhibhadra
(xii) Kamalarakṣita.

P. 328—After Kamalarakṣita came the six door-keeper scholars. After them separately came many ācāryas of Tantra.

P. 329—After the six gatekeeper scholars, there was no continuity in succession of Upādhyāyas for some years. Then came Dipaṁkara Śrijñāna. After him there was no Upādhyāya for seven years..Then Mahāvajrāsana became the Upādhyāya...then Kamalakulisa...then Narendrasrijñāna... Dānarakṣita....Abhayākara....Sabhākaragupta...Nāyakaśrī...Dharmākara-śānti...and then Śākyaśrī...

II

P. 289—Mahipāla—"Though allowing Vikramaśīla to retain its previous position, he made this the centre of great veneration."

P. 292—Mahipāla conferred on him (Jetari) "the status of a Paṇḍita of Vikramaśīla...... He delivered many sermons on the Doctrine and his fame spread more and more. He composed short commentaries on *Śikhṣāsamuccaya Caryāvatāra*, *Ākāśagarbhasūtra* etc". In general, he composed about one hundred Śāstras on many *Sūtras and Tantras.*

P. 294—"The Bhaṁgalas once revolted and came to wage war in Magadha. The Balī-ācārya of Vikramaśīla prepared *Mahābalī* for Acala. When he put it into the Gangā, many boats carrying the Turuṣkas from Bhaṁgala were drowned".

P. 295.—"During this period, among the six Door-keeper scholars the eastern door-keeper was ācārya Ratnākaraśāntipā.... Now about the southern door-keeper Prajñākaramati. He was a scholar in all the branches of learning and had the direct vision of Mañjūśrī..."

P. 296—"......Misled by the name of Parjñākara, I have found many to commit the mistake of confusing Prajñākaramati with Prajñākaragupta......Prajñākaramati was in rank a *bhikṣu* while prajñākaragupta was only an *Upāsaka*.

......Now about the western door-keeper scholar ācārya Vāgiśwarakīrti... was ordained in the sect of Mahāsāṁghika... when he became a profound Paṇḍita in grammar, logic and many other *śāstras*, he received the Cakraśaṁvara... He examined the prospect of attaining *siddhi* in Vāgiśwarasādhanā and found the answer in the affirmative.... He came to be called Vāgiśwarakīrti as a result of acquiring intelligence by which he could completely master every day the words and imports of a *śāstra* containing thousand ślokas.... He became a vast scholar of *sūtras* and *tantras*...and found no difficulty in...exposition. disputation and composition.

P. 297—...He made various preparations of elixir and gave these to others...He used to preach constantly the Vidyāsaṁbhāra, Prajñāpāramitā, Sūtrālaṁkāra, Guhyasamāja, Hevajra, Yāmari, Lankāvatāra etc... He also delivered many sermons on the doctrine.

P. 298—..."He then worked in Vikramaśīla for the welfare of all living beings for many years...."

P. 299—"In the Tibetan account Vāgiśwarakīrti is said to have been the southern door-keeper and Prajñākara, the western door-keeper. *What I have written here is based on a consensus of three Indian sources.*

...The northern door-keeper is Naropā.... Śāntipā...listened to the Doctrine from this ācārya.

P. 300—...For some years Naropā also acted as the northern gatekeeper. After he went over to caryā... He was succeeded by Sthavira Bodhibhadra... He was a scholar of the Vidyāsaṁbhāra, Caryāsaṁbhāra, and specially of the Bodhisattva-bhumi.

P. 301—"........Jñānaśrīmitra, the second great central pillar (of Vikramaśīla)...was *upāsaka* in rank......The king conferred on him the *patra* of Vikramaśīla. He expounded there mainly the Tantrayāṇa, the seven treatises on Pramāṇa, the five works of Maitreya etc."

P. 302—"......the six door-keeper scholars belonged to the first half of King Bheyapāla's reign".

P. 304—"After the six door-keeper scholars had passed away,......... Dīpaṁkaraśrījñāna was invited to be the Upādhyāya of Vikramaśīla. He also looked after Odantpuri..."

P. 307—"......When Vikramaśīla was once attacked by the Turuṣka army, *he Prajñārakṣita) made big Offerings to Cakrasaṁvara and the army was struck by terrible thunder four times.*

P. 308—......to this period also belonged the logician Yāmari...... King made a gift of large property to him......He also received the highly distinguished *Patra* of Vikramaśīla.

P. 311—"...Paṇḍita Sthirapāla alias Trilakṣa elaborately explained the Prajñāpāramitā in Vikramaśīla..."

P. 313—"...he (Abhayākaragupta) was appointed as the *Upādhyāya* of Vikramaśīla and Nālandā. By this time, the older tradition of these centres had changed.

...One hundred and sixty Paṇḍitas and about a thousand monks permanently resided in Vikramaśīlà. Even five thousand ordained monks assembled there for occasional Offerings (during the time of Rāmapāla)".

P. 314—"...Abhayākaragupta was practically the last among the most famous great ācāryas"...

"Subhākargupta was in Vikramaśīla"...

× × × × ×

We have the following account in the *Blue Annals*, i. 206—"the six gatekeeper Paṇḍitas of Vikramaśīla; at the eastern gate Śāntipā, at the southern gate Vāgīśwarakīrti, at the western gate Prajñākaramati, at the northern gate *Mahāpaṇḍita* Naropā, in the Centre, Ratnavajra and Jñānaśrīmitra; "*Cf*—also the colophon of Prajñākaramati's *Abhisamayālaṁkāravṛttipiṇḍārtha* where he is mentioned as the western door-keeper of Vikramaśīla.

H. V. Guenther—in his "*Life and Teachings of Naropa*", p. 20–says–"He (Naropā)..then joined the university for Nālandā...there were 500 scholars of whom 84 were most famous and among these four stood out in

particular..At the eastern gate 'Śes-rab-byun-gnas was the foremost in immediate and intuitive understanding of the profound and radiant nature of reality; at the southern gate Nag-po-pa (Kṛṣṇācārya) in discipline; at the western gate Ratnākaraśānti in his knowledge of grammar, epistemology, spiritual precepts, and logic, and at the northern gate Jetari in his realisation that rejection and attainment are the same when all obstacles have been overcome...when this latter head of the department died...Five Hundred Paṇḍitas resolved—'there is none more worthy than the elder *bslanpa dzinpa*' and unanimously they requested him to accept the post...and when all the Bhikṣus begged him for nine days, he graciously consented and so they installed him at the northern gate". I have a feeling that the whole episode pertains to Vikramaśīla and not to Nālandā and account seems to be confused here. Naropā was a very distinguished teacher of Vikramaśīla.

P. 317—"...Śākyaśrī is widely known...Buddhaśrī of Nepal acted for a short time as the *Sthavira* of Mahāsaṁghikas in Vikramāśīla...

...Ratnarakṣita was known as equal to Śākyaśrī in the knowledge of *Prajñāpāramitāyāṇa* and other general branches of learning. Śākyaśrī specialised in Logic and Ratnarakṣita in Tantra (and he) was the Tantrācārya of Vikramaśīla..."

P. 318—"Jñānākaragupta had the direct vision of Maitreyanātha..."

"To protect Odantapuri and Vikramaśīla, *the king even converted these partially into fortresses and stationed some soldiers there......*"

P. 319—the number of monks both in Vikramaśīla and Odantapuri remained as it was during the time of Abhayākara.

"...then came the Turuṣka king called the Moon...*Some of the monks acted as messengers for this king.* As a result, *the petty Turuṣka rulers of Bhaṁgala and other places united, ran over the whole of Magadha and massacred many ordained monks in Odantapuri. They destroyed this and also Vikramaśīla.*

APPENDIX II

(A) New Light on Vikramaśīla—(based on excavation)

From the artistic point view, it is evident that the site was an impotant centre of the Buddhist monastic establishment. The recent discovery of the Northern Gate (also north-western gate) and of about forty monastic cells at the site further corfirms our belief and support the Tibetan account with regard to the identity and location of Vikramaśīla. The images, portrayed on the walls of the Chaitya, are very important and significant and all of them belong to the Pāla period. A lengthy inscription of circa 12th century A. D. on the four sides of a pyramidical price of stone mentions of a Mahārājādhirāja Parmeśvara Śrī- Keśava. In the present state of our knowledge, it is difficult to identify this man. The inscription further eulogises the feats of a chieftain named Sahur. We have the name of another feudal chief (Rāṇaka) from an inscription found at Patharghaṭṭā. The name of Rajyapāla is mentioned, in the Antichak inscription, who is said to have built some structure over there and Sahura is believed to have effected some additions.[1] The votive stūpa inscriptions are yet to be deciphered but the five sealing inscriptions contain the name of Śrī Vijayarāja, whose identification is yet a problem. The images over the wall are of Buddha, Sambhala, Tārā, Mārīchi, Ardhanārīśvara, Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu, Padmapāni Avalokiteśwara, Hanumāna, etc. Buddha has been depicted in different poses and Mudrās. The decorative images depict a number of subjects. The secular themes present both males and females engaged in various kind of activities.

Tantric scenes are obvious. Warriors, heroes, snake-charmers, Drummers, Dancing girls find their place in these decorative images. Tibetan writers unmistakably give more information to Vikramaśīla than other monasteries because a great number of Tantric Vajrāchāryas look after the Law over there. Buddhajñānapāda looked after and preached most extensively the five Tantras. *Viz. Samāja*, *Māyājāla*, *Buddhasamayoga*, *Chandraguhyatilaka* and *Mañjuśrikrodhī*. Special emphasis was laid on the teaching of *Guhyasamāja*. The process of radical transformation leading to Tantricism found its culmination under the Pālas at the universities of Nālandā and Vikramaśīla; Sun-Pa refers to fifty eight *Saṁsthās* (insti-

1 For details See—Bhagwant Sahay's article in the *JBRS*, LVII, pp. 57-76.

tutions). Whether they corresponded to Nālandā's 'Schools' cannot be definitely said. Since Vikramaśīla was the centre of Tantric Buddhism, the study might have been divided into different branches. Various Tantric images have come to light from the site of Antichak and there is a fish in the hands of one of the Tantric yogis (being one of the ingredients of the *Pañchamakāras*). The pivot of the Pāla art is the human figure in full blooded youth and the Sensuous suggestiveness of a really spiritual mood was due at the bottom to an inner experience of erotic-nature derived from sexual Yoga of Tantric inspiration. The Pāla images do not have the serenity of the Gupta sculptures and they are basically characterised by utter sensuousness. Thematically they betray the Mohāyānic influence on one count or the other. Acording to Dr. N. R. Ray, the Pāla art and culture flourished on the patronage of the rich individuals and there was hardly any room for the people at large.

APPENDIX III

Naropā—the greatest Tantric Teacher

The famous tantric saint or *Siddha* and scholar, who held the office of the keeper of the northern gate, was Naropā. His life in Tibetan historiography is heavily embroidered with grotesque miraculous legends. He was steeped in Tibetan Buddhist lore. He was a disciple of Tilopā and it took Naropā twelve years of ardent devotion to attain his goal. He marked the beginning of a new and rich era of Buddhist thought in Tibet. He is the culmination of a long tradition. Born in 1016 A.D., he went to Kashmir at the age of eleven, returned home in 1029, married in 1032 which was dissolved after eight years by mutual consent, went to Kashmir again in 1040 and then returned to Phullaharivihāra (in North Bihar) where Naropā stayed for six years. His father's name was Shāntivarman, mother's name Śrīmati and wife's name Vimalā. Phullahari Vihāra became famous in Tibetan Buddhism because it was here that *Mar-Pa* later received the last instructions from Naropā. In 1049 he came to Nālandā and stayed there as an about for eight years. In 1057, he resigned and went out in search for Tilopā. He served Tilopā for twelve years and died in 1100 A. D. and his mortal remains are believed to have been preserved in Kanishka's monastery. Tilopā was also known as Prajñābhadra. In the Buddhist Yoga, emphasis is laid on the union of *Prajñā* (noetic) and *upāya* (communicative) and thus it insists on the harmony between action, speech and thought which are called *Vajra.*

Naropā is believed to have been the founder of the *mantrayāna* school of thought consisting of *Pārmitāyāna* and *Mantrayāna*. He defines *Tantra* as continuity, and this is threefold—*Inalienableness*, *Actuality* and *Ground.*

(i) Actuality is immanent casuality; is experimented-continuity as immanent casuality.

(ii) Inalienableness is the effect— it is the unlocalised *Nirvāṇa*; "*Vajradhara*"

(iii) Ground is the process; – is the four techniques, communication and realisation by means of two stages—developing stage and fulfilment stage.

The purpose of Tantric Buddhism is to teach man not to expect more than is possible and to avoid creating the illusion of illusions of the world. In one of his *Vajragitis*, Naropā Says :—

"These drunkards who are caught
By the demon of their habit making thoughts
See gold and stones in trees —
But they are neither gold nor gems
Following this demon of their thoughts
They are fettered
They then to conquer it
By compassion and awareness that discriminates."

According to Naropā, nothingness does not mean absolute negation but the indeterminate relational form of the act of being aware that may become terminated by any object. In order to be able to unite with any content it must be as nothing and must work freely without being warped or twisted by any bias. He explains *Sūnyatā* (nothingness), as an act of being aware in itself and brilliantly perpicuous in itself, transcending awareness (*Jñāna*) and indestractability (*Vajra*) and the conviction that the senses are delusive. The intellectual formulation is the outcome of an immediate experience. Naropā in his enunciation of Tantricism anticipates a trend in modern psychology when he defines various forms of mobility *viz* — circulatory, respiratory, digestive, eliminative, reproductive, endocrine, nervous and muscular systems. *Vāyu* (wind or breath) makes everything move. According to Naropā, love elevates, it never degrades. At the highest pitch, it is not love for something alien but participation in it as something inalienable. Genuine love is always for a person, directed towards person as reality. Naropā's triple division is as follows :—

(i) *Karmamudrā* — is a concrete woman, a sexually attractive woman, – *Padmini, Sañkhini, Chitrani, Mrigini, Hastini,* etc. defining her nature on the basis of the texture of her skin, the size of the genital organs, the gait or movement. Amoghavajra classifies women according to their complexion, the size and shape of their sexual organs and the nature and chance of the consummatory experience. Advayavajra says —"*Karmamūdrā* is delight.........Male organ is *Vajra* and female organ is *Padma*." Both are ephemeral movement of this mind (*Chitta*).

(ii) The second is mental spiritual process. The tern '*Mudrā*' has double meaning ('*to seat*' or '*not to go beyond.*' The first is given by Maitripā who says — "the five psycho - somatic constituents are the five *Tathāgatas* — viz —

(a)	Corporeality	—	Vairochana
(b)	Feeling	—	Ratnasambava
(c)	Sensation	—	Amitābha
(d)	Motivation	—	Amoghasiddhi
(e)	Consciousness	—	Akṣobhya

(iii) The thired is *Mahāmūdrā* — the culmination. In death we become free from our selfimposed shackles. The moment we strive and philosophise in the tantric sense[1], we die.

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1 Karl Jaspers, *'The Perennial Scope of Phiosophy'*, p. 26 observes—"Nowhere is the truth ready made; it is an inexhaustible stream that flows from the history of Philosophy as a whole from China to the west; yet flows only when the primal source is captured for new realisations in the present'' Jaspers calls it 'philosopyic faith'—

—Life in India in those days was not very safe in and around Vikramaśila. We learn from Brom-ton's *'Life of Atisha'* that the Tibetan mission met robbers; the Nepal retinue, already on their way to Vikramaśila, escorted them to the bank of the Ganges where they met robbers again......the Tibetan party walked by right upto the portals of the monastery which was perched on a hilltop...stayed is a great house".

APPEDIX IV

Philosophical Base

A large part of oral disputations played an important part in the educational programme of the University. Scholars of established reputation of all the world over and young aspirants of academic knowledge and fame flocked to this centre to take part in *or* to witness to the open disputations in which thesis on points of controversy were stated, defended and attacked, refutations made or lost. It was indeed a proud day in a scholar's life when he won in debates. The ideal of the scholars of this University was non-attachment as Dipaṁkara told one of the ambassadors of Tibet who had come to take him to Tibet. Nag-Tsho says "Atisha,.........at whose sight, the eyes felt no satiety.........his graceful appearance and smiling face struck everyone.........There was brightness, mixed with simplicity of expression on his face, which acted as a magic spell upon those who beheld him." Atiśa handed over charge to Ratnākara and wrote a number of books on philosophy after reaching Tibet.

Ratnakirti's intellectual eminence and scholarship brought fame to the University. He was also a Tantric and most of his manuscripts are in Maithili script. He refutes the existence of God as proposed by the *Naiyāyikas*, criticises the existence of permanent entities and demolishes the theory of the possibilities of any external continuance other than the mental one. He was a giant among the philosophers and in the eleventh century A. D. he held high the philosophical basis of Buddhism. At that time the *Naiyāyikas* had made their own contributions to the system of philosophy in Mithilā and Ratnakirti is believed to have specialised not only in all systems of Buddhist philosophy but of Brahmanical philosophy as well and herein lies his greatness. Whatever challenges have been made by the Brahmanical thinkers of Mithilā with regard to Buddhist philosophy were met rationaly by Ratnakirti whose exposition was unparallel in his age. In his books on Buddhist philosophy, he has tried to :

(i) prove the existence of Omniscient being;

(ii) expound the Buddhist theory on the meaning of words;

(iii) explains flexional characters of all the existants;

(iv) propounds Buddhist theory of unity in diversity;

(v) refutes the logicians and the Mimāṁsakas;

(vi) expounds and supports the one concerned by the Buddhists.

(vii) establishes perception and inference as the only means of knowledge and reputes the Brahmanical Schools.

The fundamental difference in their outlook was between the realism of the Buddhists and idealism of the Hindus. This led to mutual refutations which resulted in the growth of a vast mass of philosophical literatures. This parallel growth of the two diametrically apposed systems of thought continued for a pretty long time, each indirectly influencing the other. It is a thing in the philosophical history of Bihar where the Buddhist had direct confrontations and rivalry with the *Mimāṁsakas* and the *Naiyāyikas*. Right from the time of Dignāga, who had given Buddhist logic a place of honour, to the eleventh century A. D. these arguments and counter arguments continued incessantly, Udyotkara criticises the Buddhists and he is criticised by Dharmakirti and the latter is criticised by Vācaspati Miśra. Jñānaśrī and Ratnakirti were the founders of the Pramāṇavārtika School at Vikramaśīla. Ratnakirti made his *guru* Jñānaśrī more popular. Atiśa also sought Jñānaśrī's advice on esoteric matters. Jñānaśrī received special recognition from Naropānta at the time of latter's visit to the university. Ratnakīrti was a Mahāpaṇḍita and a disciple of Buddhakīrti in esoteric matters. Jñānaśrī and Ratnakirti have criticised Vācaspati while Udayanāchārya criticised Jñānaśrī. Udayana held Vācaspati's position against the Buddhists. Without having a clear conception of Jñānaśrī and Ratnakirti, it would be impossible to follow Vācaspati and Udayana. Both represent their distinctive point of view in a logistic manner and the autagonism between the two schools becomes apparent. Even after Sankar and Kumārila, the Buddhist scholars made vigorous intellectual endeavours. Intellectual discussions between the Buddhist and the *Naiyāyikas* continued upto the time of Sankar Misra who finally routed them from the philosophical sky of Mithilā. Jñānaśrī, Ratnakirti, Ratnākaraśānti, were all disciples of Āchārya Dharmapāla of Suvarṇabhumi.

Atiśa had received his early initiation in Tantricism at the hand of a Tantric yogin at Kālasilā, an ancient site of Rajgir. He left the deepest and the most abiding impression on the Tibetans and he was deitied as an incarnation of Mañjuśrī. It was as a result of his efforts that Buddhism was established as a religion in Tibet. He spent his first three years in giving his disciples "instructions in *Sādhanā*" (Spiritual course).

His two foremost Tibetan disciples were Nag-Tsho and Brom-Ton. He delivered to Brom-Ton his precepts of *Kadampā*. The Spiritual lineage of the sect is sketched in the *Blue Annals*, volume V. After Atiśa's death, Nag-Tsho built in his memory a great monastery in Nethan. Atiśa preached at Lhasa, Yarpa, Lanpa and Nethan[1]. Sākyaśrībhadra and his two pupils, Vibhutichandra and Dānaśīla, were proficient in Sanskrit and Tibetan. They are mentioned as *Paṇḍitas, Mahāpaṇḍitas, Upādhyāya* and *Āchārya.* There were Tantric Buddhist philosophers and they kept alight the torch of Tantric Buddhism in Tibet. Vibhutichandra had forsaken his princedom to become a monk. Dānaśīla translated sixty works of Tantric Buddhism in Tibet. Learned Tantric monk Vairochanarakṣita used to wander from monastery to monastery and received instructions from one Paṇḍita *Śaraṇa* (also a poet) described as the head of the assembly of '*yoginas*' in the town of Somapura.

The bulk of Tibetan translation of Sanskrit works were prepared at Vikramaśīla by Indian scholars.[2] Dipaṁkara himself translated at Vikramaśīla, with the help of Viryasiṁha, a number of his own works. The Tibetan canonical collections have a large number of works of the teachers of Vikramaśīla. A professor was called *Āchārya*'. Tāranātha speaks of Tathāgatarakṣita as *Tantrāchārya* of Vikramaśīla along with Jñānapāda, Dipaṁkarabhadra, Śrīdhara, Bhawabhadra and others. It was in the hands of the Siddhāchāryas that Buddhism attained a stage where its assimilation to Saktism was an easy matter and the fasion of the Buddhist mysticism with Saktism gave rise to a new School of Saktism called '*Kaula*'. The Tibetan legends and other sources donot throw much light

1 *Cf.* Buston's '*History of Buddhism*'.II, pp. 213-214; Hsiang-Kwang-Chou. *Indo-Chinese Relations,* Lo (Chia-Luea)—Chinese Sources for the study of Indian History (Published in Indian Archives—1949)—Two outstanding Landmarks of cultural intercourse between Tibet and India are noted in Tibetan historiography—

(i) the Mission of Padmasambhava and his followers assisted by two eminent scholars of Nalanda—Shantirakshita and Kamalashila; they instituted the Lamaist system—

(ii) the Mission of Dipaṁkara and his thirteen year's Missionary labour made Buddhism victorious in Tibet.

Tibetans were held in great esteem at Vikramaśīla and one Tibetan is known to have been appointed a Dwārapāla of Vikramaśīla—

Cf. Roerich—'*Life of Dharmaswami*'—p. XI.

2 *Cf. A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons,* Japan, 1934.

on its internal organisation. The head was called '*Adhyakṣa*' who held his post by commission from the king. Even the *Dwārapaṇḍitas* were scholars of high eminence and celebrity, holding the office on royal commission. The examination consisted of any process of enquiry into the candidates' fitness as well as direct testing of his scholastic attainments. The *Dwārapaṇḍitas* of Nālandā are mentioned as '*Men-chi*' in the Chinese record and that of Vikramaśīla as "*Go-Srun*" in the Tibetan record and the two expressions are synonymons.

Abbreviations

(1) **ABORI**—Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

(2) **ASR**—Archaeological Survey Report.

(3) **BA**—Blue Annals.

(4) **IHO**—Indian Historical Quarterly.

(5) **JBORS**—Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

(6) **JBRS**—Journal of the Bihar Research Society.

(7) **JBTS**—Journal of the Buddhist Text Society.

(8) **JASB**—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

(9) **JRAS**—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

(10) **PIHRC**—Proceedings of Indian Historical Records' Commission.

Journals

(1) Journal of the Oriental Institute.

(2) Bharati (Bengali).

(3) Sahitya (Bengali).

(4) Dacca Review—(1911, 12, 21).

(5) Indian Culture (Vol I. No. 2).

(6) Hindustan Review—1906.

(7) Jounral of the U. P. Historical Society.

(8) Indian Antiquary.

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